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SHORT STORIES  
ARTICLES OF  
LASTING INTEREST

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## THE ARMENIAN REVIEW

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*The* ARMENIAN  
REVIEW

# THE ARMENIAN REVIEW

WINTER, FEBRUARY 1961

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# the ARMENIAN *Review*

VOLUME FOURTEEN, NUMBER 1 — 53

SPRING, APRIL, 1961

● AN EDITORIAL STATEMENT:

## May 28

*Reading like a Homeric tale, an epic struggle of boundless misery, hunger, destitution and sheer courage triumphing over numerically superior external forces and almost hopeless odds is the story of May 28 which gave birth to the Independent Republic of Armenia of 1918, an illustrious event which emancipated a whole people from the yoke of oppression for the first time in six centuries, or since the demise of the Armenian Kingdom of Lesser Armenia, in 1375.*

*Forty-three troubled years have passed since that happy day when the triumphant unfurling of the Armenian Tricolor in the spring breezes of Ararat sent a thrill through the marrow of every patriotic and thinking Armenian; and forty years have elapsed since the banner of a free Armenian nation was succeeded by the skull-and-bones of the modern piratical order, and a free society was destroyed by an alien and hostile order.*

*And yet today there are hundreds of thousands of Armenians who still hold steadfastly to the memory of that event and solemnly observe every May 28 — the Armenian July Fourth — as the symbol of a future and everlasting Armenian regeneration.*

*Mutilated and bleeding from the deportations of 1915, exhausted by three long years of dogged resistance, of frantic efforts to ward off nar-*

tional extinction, surrounded by cunning and ruthless enemies bent on their betrayal and destruction, once again deceived and deserted by the Russians, finally abandoned by the Transcaucasian Sejm; forced, then, to bear the full brunt of the Turkish attack upon Armenia, and to protect, alone, as it had become their responsibility to do so, the cause of the Allied nations in Asia Minor — to prevent Turkey from occupying the Baku oil fields and thus to free unlimited quantities of precious petroleum for the use of the armed forces of imperial Germany, Turkey's ally, these ragged and famished Armenian derelicts gained a second breath at Sardarapat, Bash Abaran and Karakilisseh, where their heroic stand well compares with the gallant events at Marathon, Thermopylae and Yorktown.

So decisive and convincing was this victory that immediately Armenia was proclaimed an independent state and exactly seven days later, on June 4, 1918, the vanquished Turk became the first to recognize that independence.

A series of preliminary battles, both of a local and more general character, had hardened the Armenian volunteer and irregular soldier to the hardship, discipline and rigor of battle, imbuing him, meanwhile, with that self-confidence by chief virtue of which they overcame superior numbers, superior resources and superior trained military discipline and leadership.

At the outbreak of World War I, as many as 200,000 Armenian reservists in the so-called Caucasian sections of Armenia responded to the call to arms in addition to 20,000 volunteers who expressed their readiness to take up arms against the Turk.

Unfortunately, these troops were not utilized in the defense of the Caucasus as the Armenians desired and had been promised, Tsarist Russian perfidy having shifted the bulk of the Armenian force to the Western front, leaving only General Nazarbekian in the general area — and he too was stationed on the borders of Persia, some distance from Armenia. Of the 20,000 volunteers who yearned for service against Turkey, only 7,000 were given arms on the flimsy excuse that no rifles were available.

In spite of these handicaps, the Armenians defeated two Turkish offensives thus smashing their major objectives and preventing them from reaching in time the Baku oil fields. The first of these was Enver Pasha's attempt to reach the city of Tiflis by overwhelming the right wing of the Russian-led army in December of 1914, when a stubborn Armenian volunteer force resistance at Burduz caused a precious delay of 24 hours, thus preventing the capture of an entire Russian Army corps. The push to Tiflis itself was frustrated by the famed Fourth Battalion of Armenian Volunteers and cost the Turks no less than 30,000 lives.

The second Turkish offensive was aimed at reaching Baku by marching on Julfa and crushing the right wing of the Russian army in Persia. Here however the Turks encountered a major obstacle, the Armenians of the great city of Van who had taken up arms in self-defense. For a full

month, the men, women and children of Van, turned into an efficient military machine by the great Aram Manoogian, engaged an entire Turkish division as well as thousands of Kurdish irregulars thus preventing them from joining the main Turkish force which otherwise would have surrounded the endangered Russian wing and decimated it, with serious consequences to the Allied cause.

With the tumults of the Communist-Bolshevik revolution of 1917 the military situation was completely altered. The Russian forces, summoned home by Lenin, streamed out of the Caucasus, leaving the three nationality units, the Georgians, the Azerbaijani Tartars and Armenians, with headquarters in Tiflis, either to undertake the defense of the Caucasus and their homelands against Turkey, or else to offer no resistance, and invite the flail of the Turks.

A unified effort of resistance, known as the Transcaucasian Sejm, was established; but this alliance was of short duration. Georgia soon came to an understanding with Turkey, exchanging the city of Batum for the communities of Kars and Alexandropol, cities which neither the Turks could accept from Georgia, nor which Georgia had the right to cede or claim, since Kars and Alexandropol were historically Armenian locales. As for the third partner in the Sejm — Azerbaijan had never masked its sympathy for its co-religionist of Turkey, and Tartar contributions to the forces of the Sejm were merely token.

Armenia then was left alone to bear the burden of the defense of the Caucasus.

It was as under these conditions that the battles of Sardarapat, Karakilisseh and Bash Abaran were fought. On May 15, 1918, the Turks started their offensive via Alexandropol and Chinkil, having for their objectives the reduction of Yerevan, the capital of Armenia. The Armenian troops, inferior in numbers, equipment and military and food supplies, were driven back as far as the Arax river. The neighboring Turkish and Kurdish populations, meanwhile, had arisen against the Armenians so that by the middle of May the Ararat Valley was surrounded by enemy forces.

Gen. Silikian, the Armenian commanding officer, charged with the task of saving the whole people from annihilation, had 10,000 troops with which to oppose Wehib Pasha, who led a force more than twice that number in addition to countless irregular troops. Gen. Piroumian was stationed at Sardarapat, while Gen. Dro (Kanayan) had charge of operations at Bash Abaran.

After preliminary skirmishes in which the opposing forces alternately advanced and withdrew, on May 23, 1918, Gen. Silikian issued the long-awaited order for a general Armenian offensive. Dro was twice victorious at Bash Abaran. Meanwhile, the two armies had locked horns at the two historic spots — Sardarapat and Karakilisseh — in a life or death battle. Both actions, fought simultaneously, lasted almost four days, both ending May 28, 1918. Karakilisseh proved the more vicious field of combat.

*Here the two armies fought desperately without giving up an inch of hard-earned ground. Turkish losses in this battle alone mounted to 6,000 dead.*

*Sardarapat, on the other hand, was a complete and decisive victory for the Armenians. Immediately after the victory the military staff sent the following communication to Yerevan:*

*"After three days of battle, the Turks are defeated and are in precipitous retreat. Our troops are pursuing them. Enthusiasm is unbounded."*

*Thus, on May 28, the Turks were in pell-mell retreat on every front. Silikian's strategy and Armenian courage had triumphed. That same day, the Armenian Tricolor — the eternal symbol of the greatness and unconquerable spirit of the Armenian people — was raised high over the city of Yerevan, to greet the dawn of a new, democratic, free and independent republic.*

*Armenia had been reborn after 600 years of slavery!*

# THE TWO ARMENIAN DELEGATIONS AT THE PARIS PEACE CONFERENCE

VAHAN PAPAZIAN

## The Struggle For Survival of the Delegation of the Independent Republic of Armenia

The Sevres Treaty was left unenforced. After the disastrous Lausanne Conference, however, the Armenian people, instead of despairing, driven by an instinctive sense of self-defense, we might say, without partisan or denominational considerations, stood by the two Armenian Delegations, morally supporting them steadfastly to continue their mission. There was an even more serious reason for this moving attitude. The leaders of Soviet Armenia, after their takeover of Erevan, from the very first day exerted all effort to liquidate — as they put it — the diplomatic institutions of the "Dashnak" government in Europe and the United States and to seize their effects such as funds and negotiable goods. The first signal of this measure was taken in the beginning of 1921 with Prime Minister Kassian's radio-telegram in the name of the *Revkom* (*Revolutionary Committee*) of Soviet Armenia addressed "to all, to all" (the world) declaring the diplomatic missions of the Dashnaks as dissolved and ordering them to deliver their effects at once to their (Soviet Armenian) representatives.

The soviets had not yet cast roots among the Armenian people, had not yet assumed the appearance of a "genuine" government. The Armenian communities of the world had been shocked by the Red atrocities of the initial days by the infiltration of the foreign army.

There, in the homeland, they were destroying everything which had been built before them. The Armenian communities of the world, having rebelled, were in search of their own government. And although later the soviets gradually were recognized by certain governments, nevertheless the diplomatic position of our Delegation had not yet been shaken, and as to Kassian's radio-telegram appeals, they were generally ignored (with the exception of Persia). On the occasion of the Kassian telegram, in those days (toward the latter part of December 1920), with the participation of M. Varandian and other advisors, the Armenian Delegation held an important session in which the following resolutions were adopted which were communicated to the Allied Governments:

1. The legal Government of Armenia continues its existence, having transferred its seat to Mountainous Armenia (Zangezour-Karabagh), thus avoiding the emergence of a civil war.

2. The Caucasian Armenia has been conquered by foreign forces.

3. The declaration of the Prime Minister of the legal government and the agreement which has been signed after November 2 must be regarded as the result of duress and, therefore, null and void.

4. The Soviet statement to the effect that insurrections have broken out against the legal government in the various parts of the country is absurd.

5. The Soviets had an alliance with Mustafa Kemal in regard to the conquest of Armenia.

Thus, having stated the legal status of the delegation, there remained the actual enforcement of this declaration. What mattered was that, the political and legal position which we had postulated stood unshaken in the eyes of foreign governments. In confirmation of this stand, when our London representative of the Republic's Delegation asked Mr. Ponsonby of the British Foreign Office in regard to their attitude toward the legality of our Delegation, he said "nothing is changed by our recognition of the Soviet, you may continue your activity."

Far more significant is the statement of Mr. Herriot, the French Premier of the time.

After the conquest of the Caucasus by the Soviets, the four republics of the Caucasus, having taken the same stand, had identical worries. On the eve of the recognition of the Soviet, on October 15, a memorandum was presented to all the governments by the delegates of the Caucasian republics in which stress was laid on a positive decision of said Republics to the effect of insisting on their independence. Besides, in the name of the four Republics, the President of our Delegation was received by Mr. Herriot's successor La Roche who admitted to him that "the Premier has full information in regard to

the situation which has been created and he hopes that the Caucasian representatives shall be satisfied with the resolution which was prepared by Mr. Herriot."

This resolution, released on October 29, said the following in regard to the Armenians: "France recognizes the Soviet government in those territories whose populations recognize the Soviet government."

The same stand was taken by Italy and Greece, suggesting that we continue our activity without any noise.

Yet, the matter would not end here, of course. How were the matters of visas and allegiances affecting the government of the Armenian Republic to be dealt with?

According to the provisions of the Sevres Treaty Armenians living in foreign countries were free to accept the citizenship of Armenia and leave the country within one year. In the first days of the Soviet regime, one in a thousand would, of course, want to accept Soviet citizenship. For a long time, many of the expatriated Armenians lived and traveled under the protection of the Republic Delegation's visas, there were no visa difficulties at that time. Not only this, but members of our Delegation or government men who had come from Armenia received their visas without any difficulty. With the advent of the Soviets, however, these visas issued by the legal government encountered great difficulties. First, Turkey refused to recognize them, then Germany, but finally, for at least a certain period we were able to receive semi-official visas. These developments steadily deteriorated the legal status of the Armenian Government.

This was the main reason why the League of Nations made provision for a special type of citizenship to expatriated Armenians which were known as Nansenian identification papers. In short, the Armenian expatriated masses adopted for themselves the so-called "Nansenian citi-



zenship," after the name of Fridtjof Nansen, a full-powered Commissioner of the League of Nations for the protection of persecuted minorities (Greeks and Armenians). Member nations of the League of Nations showed a more humane and tolerant attitude toward members of this category both in the matter of freedom of travel and the right to find employment, but when later these expatriated unfortunates were infiltrated by a large number of masked "escapees", namely Communists, thus rendering the character of the Nansenian citizenship suspect, in the course of time the Armenian expatriates were reduced to homeless persons. By degrees, the Armenian visas lost their legal efficacy and eventually were preserved by many as a relic of the old and better days.

This matter became so urgent that at the initiative of our (Republic's) Delegation, and with the participation of the National Delegation (The Delegation of Nubar Pasha)<sup>1</sup> we held a series of sessions in which we discussed ways and means of protecting the citizenship right of persecuted Armenians. Such measures included appeals for membership in the International Red Cross and the Postal Union.

#### The Delegations and Nansenian Citizenship

Particularly in the initial days of the establishment of the Soviet regime in Armenia, our Delegation was in a tense psychological state. We felt the ground slowly was slipping from under our feet. The zeal to cling tightly to our rights and to preserve them had attained to great heights. We did not content ourselves to only knocking at the doors of the big shots in Paris, but, with feverish alacrity, we began to linger in various capitals, around

their foreign ministries, in our attempt to prevent the extinguishment, the oblivion of the Armenian Case.

The President of our Delegation, Mr. Aharonian, and the Vice President Mr. Khatissian knew no rest, their brief cases ever ready, they traveled the Balkans, Athens, Prague, Rome, Vienna, Berlin, Brussels and London.

At the London Conference (February 21, 1921) the two delegations presented a single "solemn" delegation, accompanied by the former persecuted Patriarch Zaven Archbishop, Karekin Pasdermajian, General Sebouh, and Messrs. Araratian and Varandian. The diplomatic circles in London were astir, the London Conference, upon which great hopes were built, was in the offing. Both the old and the new Turkey were scheduled for representation. And while the new Turkey took part in the Conference, their representatives Ambassador Ali Fouad, Yousouf Kemal and Dr. Riza Nouri were holding negotiations in Moscow with Chicherin and Gorkmazov.

We were advised of these proceedings. The President of our Delegation (later joined by several others of our members) hastened to London. The Secretary for Eastern Affairs of the Foreign Office was known to us and was favorably disposed toward the Armenian Case. His name was Vansittart.

The questions which interested us were: a) to remove the soviets from Armenia, b) the maintenance of diplomatic relations with the expatriated, legal government of Armenia, c) to be accepted in the League of Nations, and d) to enter into personal contact with the banking firm called Townsend to latter which end Aharonian and agriculturist advisor Piralian made the first approach.

If I am not mistaken, this mission of Aharonian was accompanied by Nubar Pasha, Noradounghian and Pashalian, all three

<sup>1</sup> Participants in these sessions were prominent Armenian jurists: K. Noradounghian, A. Mandelsham, Ajemian, M. Babachanian, and K. Sinabian.

of whom cordially supported the effort. Meanwhile, this mission had come to protest against the pending evacuation of Cilicia.<sup>2</sup>

In constant travel was also the Vice President of our Delegation, Khatissian. Being assigned the direction of the internal affairs, I was less absent but my absences were longer, such as my journeys to Berlin and Riga, my travels to Brussels, Basil, Geneva and others were for more brief periods.

Before me, the Delegation had sent to Brussels Rouben Berberian, a specialist of social and economic problems. Here, on Sept. 20, 1920, was to be held an "International Economic and Financial Conference" which was to draft "An outline of the solution of financial issues resulting from the World War."

Our Delegation had prepared a comprehensive written report to present to the Conference in which, following a graphic description of the economic ravages of the war upon Armenia, a catalog of the natural resources of Armenia was presented, the exploitation of which would enable the country to become self-sufficient. The Delegation asked the following from the Conference:

A. To standardize the transportational means of Armenia through the installation of railways and other means.

B. To aid in the utilization of the land's agricultural and mineral resources and especially its fabulous water power, to which end an appeal would be made to local and foreign investors.

C. To standardize the finances, replacing

<sup>2</sup> Before leaving for London, Briand assured the delegates of the French Parliament that, to keep Cilicia, an army of 4-5 hundred thousand troops would be necessary, whereas at the time they only had one hundred thousand. Later it came to light that Briand had deceived the Parliament. The French force in Cilicia at the time did not exceed 12,000.

the paper money with other currencies based upon the gold standard. To this end to found a national bank through Armenian and foreign investors, to sign a foreign loan to enable the launching of great enterprises, reconstruction, and the utilization of the land's natural resources.

For the realization of these aims our Delegation was appealing to the aid of the Brussels Conference.

On October 21 of the same year, with the same personnel, a second conference was held in Brussels and this time it was I who was sent there (as a noted authority on finance) Fortunately, in response to my request, David Misirlian, a resident of Brussels and the owner of a great tobacco factory, was of great help to me in my labors. We drafted a new report at his home which was typed at his factory, and the next day, when Premier Henri Gaspard was emerging from the Ministers Council, we presented ourselves to him.

Apparently the proceedings in the Ministers Council had not been very agreeable, for the sullen-faced Premier was intercepted on his way he gave us a very cold reception on foot, listened to us for a moment, and after telling us we should have appealed directly to the Conference, without even looking at our report, he moved on. Completely distressed, Misirlian looked at me while I, having gulped my grief of a mourner, smiled back and said "these are customary things for us. They often shut the door in our faces but never mind..."

We learned that the British delegate was one Wardrop (British High Commissioner to Caucasus, 1919) whom I had met in Tiflis several times in connection with Armeno Azerbaijani negotiations. He had checked in at one of the best hotels in the city. I accordingly sent him my visiting card and half an hour later he received me at his quarters. "Yes, I remember you from



the Caucasus, but why are you here?"

I repeated our chant in regard to economic and financial aid, supplementing it with our written report. Scanning briefly the contents of the paper, he said in a dry sarcastic tone: "You have come to seek our aid to Bolshevik Armenia. Simple-minded of you, to say the least. The Russians have gold mines, go knock at their doors." And that was all. Thus ended my mission and having nothing further to accomplish I returned to our headquarters.

In 1920 the Allies held a conference at San Remo. It is well worth to say a word about this since it was here that the attitude of our neighbor Georgians was to be determined. Our representatives to this conference were Aharonian, Khatissian, Giulkhandian. Among other matters the conference was to consider the question of Armeno-Georgian boundaries. The Georgian representatives were Social Democrat leaders Chkheitz, Dzeretzeli, and, I think, Keketchgory. Prior to one of the important sessions the British delegate Vansittart invited over the Armenian and Georgian delegations for a consultation with a view to striking a common ground on the adjudication of their eastern boundaries.

Our Delegation demanded an exit to the Black Sea, starting from Batum, through Shavshetya and via the two banks of the Jorokh River, and only then, on the right bank, to terminate at Kars. A railroad was to be built on this line in the interest of Armenia which was to serve as a sort of window to the outside world and essential to its economic independence. Such a line would cut in half the road to import and export from Europe to Armenia, without going through Georgia, and would also serve Persia as a shorter way of communication with the outside world instead of depending on the longer and more costly route of the Persian Gulf.

This plan seemed both just and practical

to Vansittart who made a great effort, and even threatened to terminate the negotiations in his attempt to coerce the Georgians but the latter was adamant in their refusal, objecting that these territories belonged to Georgia and that they envisaged a future danger in such a plan (obviously envisioning an imperialist Armenia). Thus, this vital proposition came to naught, thanks to those "Socialist" gentlemen.

Beginning with the days of the Armistice in 1919 the Georgian delegates in Europe followed us like a shadow everywhere we went on our political and diplomatic missions. Wherever we went we found them confronting us. And the reason was plain. The Armenian Question had been recognized as an international issue for long years, and, in this connection, the task of renewing our relationships and ties seemed more feasible now, and our success even more likely. For Georgia and the Georgians it was the first time that they were presenting their case to the world as a political claim. For this reason they had need of us, our ties and our experience, assets which they utilized to the limit, and often exploited them.

Later, when they became more closely acquainted with the hard politics, especially after the failure of the Sevres Treaty, they did their best to limit the Armenian Case to the confines of the Caucasus, making it a political question for the Caucasian nations. This perfidious policy had two motives: a) to doom the Turkish-Armenian case to oblivion, and b) as an important factor in both Caucasian and international politics, to confine the Armenian to the orbit of the Caucasian nations, and thus, to be rid of Armenia's quarrel with the Turks. As they figured it, this would facilitate the formation of a common front against Russia.

Then followed the Allied Conference in Geneva, once again to consider the com-

plex eastern questions. Significantly enough, the Turks were not invited to this conference, and therefore, their press and political circles were blowing fire and brimstone against the so-called "Imperialists." The delegates of Soviet Russia however, were there, defending the Turkish interests with extraordinary zeal. These were accompanied by the representatives of Georgia, Ukraina, and the Soviets, including Alexander Begzadian, "The Foreign Commissar SSR Armenia." Our Delegation was represented by Aharonian and Khattissian, who, however, returned empty-handed.

### The Inter-relations of Our Two Delegations

What was the picture of the interrelations of the two Delegations when in September of 1920 I arrived at Paris, and when, later, I followed closely and took part in their activities as a member of the Republic's Delegation?

More than one year had passed since the days of the Paris National Congress where the differing views in regard to the rights of the two delegations were expressed and stressed.

The Delegation of Boghos Nubar Pasha which had kept its existence in abeyance from almost the Reform days of 1912 — although without a personnel and alone — had been reorganized after 1919 and considered itself the sole legitimate body to prosecute the Turkish-Armenian Case. As in the days of the Reforms, its sole moral prop was first the Patriarchate of Constantinople, and only next the leadership of the Western Armenian expatriation from which Nubar Pasha's Delegations seemed to have tacitly received this moral prerogative.

Imbued with this psychology, to this Delegation, the "audacious" presumptions (as they called it) of Aaronian's Delegation,

namely the Delegation of "Russian Armenians," or the "Araratian Republic," not only to interfere in the Turkish Armenian Case, but "to take decisive steps in this direction" seemed strange and illegal.

At times the quarrels between the two were both unconcealed and highly disagreeable. And, filled with this type of mentality, their mutual relations at times were silent and concealed, and at times they assumed the proportions of extraordinary and vindictive exhibitions.

The following behavior of Boghos Pasha is a case in point. One day he protested to the Directors of Eastern Affairs of the French and British Foreign Ministries that "Aharonian is only the representative of Russian Armenians and he had no right to interfere in the Turkish Armenian Case. The legal guardian of the Turkish Armenian Case is the National Delegation".

After his death, Boghos Pasha was replaced by K. Noradounghian, a man of great tact, and one who was highly proficient in his knowledge of the intricacies of diplomacy. He was flexible in his relations. Formerly he had been a member of a commission to adjudicate the Turco-Persian eastern boundaries and, in this connection, he had familiarized himself also with the Turkish Armenian eastern provinces. Noradounghian, highly experienced and more of an eastern mind, was able to find a middle course, to develop a *modus operandi* with Aharonian. For a time, apparently, all was straightened out, but Noradounghian's disastrous stands in connection with the so-called National Home and the Lausanne Conference in which he advocated the idea of an Armenian National Home under Turkish Protectorate set the two delegations completely at odds. But of this I shall have more to say later when I recount the developments at the Lausanne Conference.

Despite the fact that for long years Boghos Pasha was wholly devoted to the

Armenian Cause and had become one of its principal leaders, unfortunately he remained a stranger to the Armenian reality and immune to its history and its general aspirations from beginning to end. In 1912 when as a delegate from the Security Council of the Armenian Patriarchate of Constantinople I called on him at Paris (See my *Memoirs*, Vol. II) I convinced myself that he was not changed much, he had not become a part of the spiritual compulsions of our people.

In his intolerant spirit, his erroneous conceptions and his perpetually changing convictions, a nefarious role, unfortunately, was played by those who surrounded him, some of whom dishonestly abused his confidence. Boghos Pasha's fickle-mindedness was not confined to his personal friends alone, but once he made up his mind affirmatively on any question, it was difficult to budge him.

Besides, in Boghos Nubar Pasha the voice of the education and the authority of his distinguished family spoke loudly. He was used to commanding people and it was with difficulty that he received free dis-sidence from his views.

When in September of 1920 I arrived at Paris my first call was devoted to this great man. When I told him I had come as a member of the Delegation of the Armenian Republic the smile of a deep satisfaction shone in his expressive eyes. Then he gave me an objective account of the present condition of our case and his labors, meanwhile pouring out his bitterness against Aharonian. Highly excited, and no longer able to restrain himself, he exploded: "The pitiful schoolmaster of yesterday has the temerity of trying to seize my prerogatives. No, I could never tolerate such a thing."

Before he quieted down, suddenly realizing my official capacity, surprized and distressed, he added: "You said you have come to join Aharonian's Delegation, but

aren't you a Turkish Armenian? How could you have joined them?"

So stuffy was the air, and so frenetic was the factional and personal hatred of this great man which, unfortunately, he had acquired from others.

Boghos Pasha was very meticulous in his approach to his responsibilities. And he was convinced that this responsibility entrusted him from "above" (the Patriarchate and the Congress of Paris) belonged to him and his immediate associates alone. For this reason, exorbitantly zealous over his commitments, he was pathologically suspicious of any person who differed with him in regard to the Turkish Armenian Case. With the best of intentions he considered the Armenian case his own estate whose keys had been turned over to him by the nation and entry into which was forbidden to any other man.

It became, for instance, the object of a long controversy as to whether 'it was the Russian Armenian Republic which was to be annexed to the Western independent Armenia, or the reverse.' The National (Nubar Pasha's) Delegation insisted that Western Armenia should be the basis of the Armenian state because it is international in nature, and that "Russian Armenia" was in danger of being swallowed up by Russia.

These absurd controversies assumed such a sharp character that authoritative Armenians from the outside attempted to mediate in behalf of cooperation. For instance, one Hagopian and an associate from London, Hohavannes Khan Masehian and Vorberian from Paris, and even Swiss and British friends made similar appeals to both sides.

And finally, on February 17, 1921, a joint session was held at the residence of Boghos Nubar, attended by Aharonian, Noradounghian, Sinabian, Varandian and Papazian. In advisory capacity invited were Tirayr Archbishop, Hagopian, Aserbegian, Das-

dagian and Baronian.

In the name of the United Delegation a new document of claims was drafted to be presented to the London Conference. The document pertained to the matter of Cilician Autonomy consisting of four points. All twenty who attended this memorable session signed the Memorandum.

Thus the struggle for jurisdiction dragged on for a long time, at times moot, and at times in the open, from time to time emerging before the outside world as "United Delegation."

A relationship of this sort was continued even long after the Sevres Treaty. Only in the days immediately following the signing of the Treaty, and under the impression of the moment, Boghos Pasha decided to make his stand clear in regard to the new situation. Accordingly, on January 9, 1921, he sent a circular letter to the "Hamazgayin Marmin" (National Council) of Istanbul which, according to him, represented "the Armenians of all denominations in Turkey," the Armenian National Union of Adana which represented the Armenians of Cilicia, the Armenian communities of Egypt, Paris, and Greece, and the Mekhitarist Institute of Venice.

The circular letter asked if these people were in favor of prolonging the term of the National Delegation in view of the emergence of the Sevres Treaty. Upon receipt of many affirmative replies the Delegation continued its existence, nevertheless the internal struggle over the matter of jurisdiction never ceased.

On March 25 of the same year, speaking for the Republic's Delegation, Khatissian and Sarkis Araratian applied to the National Delegation for a new joint session of the two delegations. The representatives of the Republic's Delegation brought along a memorandum consisting of seven points for common discussion. The ensuing debates were long and, finally, on July 7, 1921, a

new session was held and this time, with the idea of signing a very sincere, decisive and lasting pact, it was agreed that, thereafter, their letters and memoranda addressed to foreign governments would be signed by the title "Les delegations Armeniennes reunies," the two delegations preserving the while their internal identities.

Even this much was a great concession, of course. The existence of two delegations often confused the foreign diplomats, to say nothing of their being the cause of much needless and harmful competitions and even controversies.

Alas, however, that this beautiful idea of a united delegation was short-lived, despite the accepted agreement. Even after this, there were frequent deviations from both sides, causing ever increasing complications. This state of affairs was continued even as late as 1924, after the fiasco of Lausanne when it was presumed that, by then, we should have come to our senses.<sup>3</sup>

This unpleasant and strange state of relationship attained such proportions that the "International Union" of our foreign friends, assembled in Geneva, September 2, 1924, hent to us the following desperate call as an open letter to "Aux invitees de la Conference Philarmenienne et Armenienne et a tous les Armeniennes."

Following is the copy of this open letter in whole:

#### OPEN LETTER

*To those who were invited to the Conference of the Armenians and Friends of the Armenians assembled in Geneva, September, 1924, and to all Armenians:*

*Geneva, Sept. 2, 1924.*

<sup>3</sup> In justice it should be said in behalf of K. Noradounghian and A. Khatissian that these two, from the very start, did their utmost for the sake of sincere cooperation between the two delegations.

The first session of the Armenians and Friends of the Armenians, September, 1924, revealed that the intentions of the Armenophile League have both been ignored and disfigured. The Armenophile League sees the causes of this misunderstanding chiefly in the narrow partisan spirit which has divided the Armenians and in the perpetual distrust which prevails among both sides.

This lack of trust was transmitted also to the Armenophile League and it was thought that the League was being inspired only by one faction of the Armenians, or was being made the victim of their perfidy.

This is positively untrue. And the League vigorously repels such a baseless imputation.

Far more than interfering in Armenian internal policies, the League would like to see these internal feuds ended, feuds which are dissipating the prestige of the Armenian people, its influence, and its activity, causing great harm to the Armenian people.

It was the primary aim of the League in assembling this conference to survey the views which express the real desires of the Armenian people in regard to those important issues which are a cause of great concern to them.

In inviting the Armenian delegations to its previous sessions the League was desirous of receiving instructions in regard to the defense of Armenian views. At present, the League clearly feels that these two delegations alone do not represent the Armenian public opinion. This is the reason why the League extended the range of the invited guests to attend the sessions, besides the two delegations, coming from

various countries. But the League unfortunately had been unable to invite to Geneva the representatives of the present Armenian Government in view of the present state of diplomatic relations between the Soviet Republic and Switzerland.

The League was not understood by many. This is regrettable, and yet the lack of confidence to which it was subjected once even by an official delegation<sup>4</sup> did not prevent it from continuing its labors in behalf of the Armenians without any discrimination, because, over and above individuals and partisan spirit, it wants to see the Armenian people united and, completely devoid of selfish interests, it aspires to their happiness and well being.

It is to this whole of the Armenian people, therefore, (no matter under what regime, assembled around Erevan or scattered to the four winds) that the League of the Friends of the Armenians makes this cordial appeal: "Armenians, if you have need of us, we are always here."

In the name of the International Armenophile League, the assembled International Conference consists of German, American, Belgian, French, Greek and Swiss friends of the Armenians.

President EDOUARD NAVILLE  
Secretary CRAFT-BONNARD

We had never received a more bitter and stinging lesson from foreigners.

Alas, after the Lausanne Treaty there was no longer any juridical ground under our feet. Our Delegations were stripped of their mission and were converted into "Refugee Offices."

<sup>4</sup> The reference seems to be directed at the "National Delegation", because, in those days, Boghos Pasha thought the League kept closer ties with the Republic's Delegation.



# SOGHOMON TEHLIRIAN

SARKIS ATAMIAN

## THE PRISON

Tehlirian stood as though stunned. He never imagined the fiend would die so easily . . . not a whimper; not a quiver. Dead. Absolutely, irretrievably dead. Instantly and completely dead . . . the fiend who had ordered the destruction of a million and a half innocent, helpless victims . . . only they had suffered indescribable agony and indignity. Did he know in that last millionth of a second what it was to die . . . to suddenly feel nothingness so mercifully, without the agony of his victims? From his still open mouth, the dark blood from his darker soul trickled out and enveloped his face in a pool of ooze. Tehlirian did not know how long he stood there watching to be certain of this last certainty. For a moment, he had the impulse to empty his revolver into the corpse. Instead, he threw it away on the street.

He became aware that a woman passerby had screamed a few paces away . . . and fainted. A man ran to pick her up. Voices grew louder and when Tehlirian came back to full awareness he saw a crowd had already gathered around. There were shouts of, "He killed a man, stop him, get him." A man or two took a few steps closer to him, but the crowd was stunned . . . no one did anything. Tehlirian stepped back, looked around him and now the significance of the outside world began to break on him. He convinced himself again that

Talaat was dead. What was he doing here . . . looking at the crowd? Suddenly he turned, and walked away. Two or three people started for him. He broke into a run up the street. The crowd's paralysis dissolved.

Some shouted. Others gave chase. A huge burly man was coming at him. As they grappled, the mob caught up. Fists flew from behind. The sheer weight of people scrambling on him brought him to his knees. He shouted, "What is all this to you . . . he is a Turk; I'm Armenian. Leave me alone."

He winced as someone began kicking him viciously in the ribs. A heavy clout on his head poured blood into his eyes. He began to blackout. Suddenly, he became aware that the blows were ceasing and the crowd was falling back. A police officer stood towering above him. Several people in the crowd tried to be helpful . . . "He's an Armenian, the other a Turk." The officer broke up the mob and got Tehlirian to his feet. As he staggered away, his arm pinioned behind him, he could see the crowd gathering down the street, gazing with curiosity at the corpse in the gutter.

He was thrown into a cell of the Charlot-tenburg precinct station. Sometime later, a guard came in and bandaged his head wounds, in silence. He was then taken to the secret service division headquarters where a crowd of officials and officers

were milling about. There was an excitement in the air and the officials knew that this would be no ordinary, routine case. He was taken to another cell until the interrogators were ready for him.

He sat there in the gloom and quiet taking stock of the situation. He says, in his memoirs, that he was filled with a spiritual contentment the like of which he had never before experienced. His mission was accomplished. His mother, family, nation . . . he had avenged them all. He had justified the reason why he had been placed on this earth. His deed had given meaning to his life and his death would give meaning to the lives of others because of that deed. He had freed his soul from the driving compulsion of his conscience; he had done what he had to do because a million martyrs placed this obligation on some one of their brethren; he had shouldered the burden. And now . . . he was surrounded by iron bars, and the outside world, which was totally oblivious of the world inside his soul, would proceed on its aimless way. He thought of the three years of searching and toil, of his capture, of the corpse in the gutter.

His thoughts were interrupted as a guard turned the key in the squeaking lock, opened the door and led him to another room beyond a maze of corridors. They entered and Tehlirian was confronted by an officious-looking man seated behind his desk. At first, Tehlirian tried answering the many questions with his limited German, but the questions became too complicated. He said he did not understand German too well. Would they provide him with an interpreter? He was returned to his cell. Later that evening, he was escorted, in manacles, to the central police headquarters under heavy guard. As they made their way along, he chuckled at his manacles. They were of heavy cord fastened to a stout stick. He remembered his

boyhood and how they played horse and rider . . . using a similar device for the make-believe harness. It was so long, long ago . . . and so much had happened in between.

Again, he was placed in a cell. This one had a small, barred window. A bunk was fastened to one wall, and to another, a folding table which pulled out to hold a clay pitcher of water. Twilight was rapidly falling and the un-globed light bulb overhead could be switched on and off only from the outside. The iron-barred door had a small opening in the middle of it.

He lay on the bunk and became aware that his wounds were beginning to pain and smart. He had developed a fever. The key rattled in the lock, a guard entered, and under escort, he was taken to the second floor for more interrogation.

There were many officials present, but there was a surprising silence in the room. A goateed official behind the desk was apparently in charge. In front of him, on the desk, was an opened folder of official-looking papers, a European styled hat, with its white lining turned inside out, spattered with blood, and a cane. One of the officials was critically examining the revolver Tehlirian had thrown on the street. The interrogator repeated his questions in different ways, and Tehlirian continued to insist that he wanted an interpreter . . . especially because it would be necessary to give an adequate outline of who the fiend Talaat was, and what he had done to the Armenina nation.

The interrogator took the revolver and pointed it toward his head from various angles asking how that shot had been fired. Until now, a younger man with obviously Asiatic features had been standing by in complete silence. At the interrogator's demonstration, the Asiatic one burst out in Turkish, "You scoundrel, how could your hand find a way to kill that lion-like man?"

Tehirian was stunned. Was there a Turk anywhere who did not know what Talaat had done . . . what he really was? Tehirian snapped back, "In the same way he killed a million innocent victims!" "Ah," exclaimed the interrogator, leaping to his feet, "so the prisoner knows Turkish, eh?" "Better than I do, apparently," exclaimed the Asiatic one. "Therefore," said the interrogator to the Asiatic one, "we can continue our questioning with your help. Ask him why he committed this crime?" The Turk's voice began to tremble as he phrased his first question, but he never quite finished. Tehirian positively refused to answer any questions in Turkish. He insisted on an interpreter. The Turk left the room in anger.

The interrogator's attitude quickly and visibly changed. In a softer, kinder voice, he asked Tehirian to be seated and talked at length. Tehirian guessed that the interrogator was showing some sympathy, or at least understanding, as referred to the massacres. Tehirian still insisted that a translator be provided. The interrogator, stroking his goatee, smiled and nodded to the guards. Tehirian was taken out of the room and returned to his cell, where, fifteen minutes later, the lights were turned off.

He tossed for hours on his bunk asking himself how he would present his case tomorrow for there would undoubtedly be more questions. He reviewed the facts in his mind. He went to the beginning of Armenian-Turkish relationships and how the two peoples had managed to co-exist until the advent of Sultan Ablul Hamid, the Sick Man of Europe. It was Hamid who, viewing the political jealousies of the European powers, played them off, one against the other, and in the ensuing stalemate, began the Armenian massacres. The Young Turk massacres, some twenty years later, were different, Tehirian thought. Hamid's massacres were sporadic . . . the

women and children had a chance to escape. But the Young Turks . . . they were systematic and unyielding as they pursued every Armenian to all corners of the country, seeking to destroy the entire Armenian nation . . . not just individuals. Tehirian continued reviewing the political history of the past, wondering how he could best present the Armenian case to demonstrate that the Turks were guilty of the most vicious, unthinkable genocide of the twentieth century. Finally, sleep gave rest to his tortured mind.

In the morning, one of the prisoners on good behaviour, came in to fill the pitcher with water and leave a cup of thin coffee. Tehirian washed and drank. An hour later, some officials came in accompanied by Kalousdian who was to be Tehirian's interpreter. They had become acquainted in Berlin before the assassination, and as they embraced, Tehirian was choked with emotion. He was not alone. Far from it, Kalousdian assured him. The entire Armenian world had been electrified with the news of Talaat's assassination, and they had vowed to defend Tehirian to the end. He sobbed. His people . . . his Armenian people, there were none so glorious even in their most tattered moments.

Kalousdian had brought a box of cookies and sweets. Tehirian put these aside and asked for news. His comrade told him that Herr Schultzen would do the preliminary cross-examination. They went to the interrogation room and Tehirian faced Schultzen calmly. Schultzen, in a perfunctory manner, said that Tehirian was charged with murder. "What made you do it?" he asked. Tehirian replied, "Because he ordered the destruction of my people."

Schultzen smiled. "So you admit you killed him," he asked. "Of course I admit it," Tehirian said. "Under the same circumstances, I would do so again, gladly, and gladly offer my life for the bargain."



"Who helped you do this?" asked Schultzen. "No one," said Tehlirian. "I alone am fully responsible, and if there are those who did help me, I will never reveal them to you." Schultzen paused for a moment and asked, "What was your personal quarrel with the victim?" "Everything," Tehlirian said, "it was on his orders that my mother, brother, and family were massacred. It was on his orders that my people were systematically butchered. It was on his orders that my native land was despoiled. I have trailed him for three years. I have lived only to avenge my people with his life."

"Do you then admit that your act was pre-meditated?" Schultzen asked. "Of course," Tehlirian said, but just then he noticed Kalousdian shaking his head negatively, frowning. "Does not your conscience disturb you?" asked Schultzen. "Of course not. On the contrary, it is filled with great satisfaction because justice has been done. A million innocent martyrs have been avenged." "Then you did not come to Berlin to study engineering, did you?" "I wanted to, I dreamt of it before the War, but the massacres changed all that." "Do you know that, by law, you face the death penalty?" "Yes, I know, but since my mission has been accomplished successfully, you can do anything with me you wish." "When did you decide to kill Talaat?" "When I took an oath on my mother's unmarked grave that if he ever fell into my hands, I would kill him without condition or hesitation."

After more questioning, Tehlirian was taken back to his cell. He was perspiring heavily and his wounds had grown more painful. Another prisoner, on good behaviour, came into the cell with water and fresh bandages and re-dressed Tehlirian's aching cuts. He introduced himself as Levine and talked rapidly while tying the bandages. He was imprisoned for alleged embezzlement, he said, but pleaded in-

nocence, saying that personal enemies had framed him. He turned out to be a remarkable fellow, this Levine. He already knew all about the assassination of Talaat, all about the details of the interrogation thus far, and a great deal about the massacres. He was openly sympathetic to the Armenians.

Levine said that every newspaper in Berlin, with bold headlines, carried the news of the assassination. He prophesied that the case would gain international attention, because the real issue was the crime of the Turks . . . but there were legal considerations. For example, did Tehlirian know that the unconditional penalty for a political crime was death? Whereas, he might get off with fifteen years hard labor if it were a personal crime of passion. Then, Levine criticized Tehlirian for having colored his initial statements with so many political facts. He advised Tehlirian to try to undo the harm already done with his defiant admission of guilt. Tehlirian's conviction would morally exonerate the Turks.

Levine left, after grabbing a handful of sweets which Tehlirian offered him, leaving him to mull over these utterances. Tehlirian now realized why Kalousdian had frowned, and why he had refused to sign the official transcript of the interrogation. Tehlirian had long since made his peace with God. He was perfectly willing to give his life for his act, and for his people . . . he had confessed without a tremor. He had not even given a thought for his own salvation while tracking down the field for three long years. "Oh, my God," he sobbed aloud, "there are so many things I did not even think of . . ." And he suddenly knew he wanted to live . . . he had to live, for no matter how just his cause, blind world opinion would exonerate the Turk if he were convicted. His conviction would be the conviction of all Armenians. The world would brand this deed as an injustice, for-

getting the justice to which the Armenian was entitled. He had to live, if not for himself, then for Armenia, so that the tragedy of the past would somehow inspire hope for the future, so that that which is Armenian would not be a dishonored spark that glowed and died for a moment to be lost forever in the infinite universe of infinite universes showing infinite sparks which glow and quickly die.

Sometime later, Levine and another fellow prisoner were passing out the meager meal for the prisoners. They stopped by Tehlirian's cell, and Levine passed the dinner through the opening in the door . . . a bowl of thin watery soup which contained everything but meat. Levine whispered that later he would have the latest newspaper for Tehlirian.

Three hours passed. Then Tehlirian heard his name being called in a loud whisper outside the barred door. He arose from his bunk to see Levine slide the newspaper under the door. Good old Levine. The man was a miracle monger . . . how did he manage all these things? What were his connections? Tehlirian saw the headlines in the *MORGEN POSTE*. His name was emblazoned in bold letters and he could understand well enough what he read. Talaat had been assassinated by a young Armenian student for political reasons. By implication, the death penalty seemed assured. By extension, the defamation of Armenian rights would also be assured.

Late in the afternoon, Tehlirian was taken before Schultzen again, for more questioning. This time, Tehlirian placed his emphasis on the personal aspects of the case . . . his extreme emotional agitation caused by the ruthless extermination of his family and relatives. Although it was forbidden to carry on a private conversation between Kalousdian and Tehlirian, except in the line of official interpreting, the former managed to pass on some important

news to the latter. The Turks in Berlin were formally organizing and sparing no expense to get a conviction. The Armenian community, throughout the world, was also organizing and sparing no expense for an acquittal . . . except that the emphasis was being placed on the political aspects of the case.

Tehlirian had returned to his cell for just a few moments when Levine whispered again. This time, a fragment of mirror was slipped through the bars and Tehlirian beheld his face for the first time since the assault. He was shocked at the image of his swollen features. While he reviewed the events of his latest interrogation, he had to admit one thing no matter which way he turned it over in his mind . . . he had, in fact, admitted that his act was fully premeditated. This would be the crucial issue in the coming trial.

On the following morning, there was more interrogation, this time conducted by Herr Mandteufel, a hard, shrewd, unsympathetic person. His approach clearly presumed that pre-meditation alone left no room for mitigation. Tehlirian insisted all the more on the personal element of revenge. Again, Kalousdian managed to convey some important news . . . the Armenians were ready to obtain the finest legal counsel available in Berlin, no matter what the cost.

As he returned to his cell, Tehlirian noticed Levine was there mopping the floor. He already knew that Mandteufel was the interrogator and he warned Tehlirian that Mandteufel would show no mercy. He, Levine, had received his own conviction at the hands of that legal Javert.

Five days later, Tehlirian was transferred to the Central Prison, and being deprived of Levine's friendship and counsel was heartbreaking. Tehlirian had been given a shower, prison clothes, and a redemption ticket with which he could later claim his

personal effects . . . if he escaped execution. The cell was larger than the former one, but pretty much the same in its layout. He was immediately advised of the rules and regulations, and the discipline was iron-clad. Everything was done by the sound of a bell. The first bell in the morning signified reveille, and he would stand ready with his pitcher. The second bell meant that water and soap had arrived. At the third bell, the cleaning of the cell would begin. The fourth, fifth and *ad infinitum* bells all meant something. The food was the same, barely sustaining life.

On the morning of the second day, the prison chaplain arrived, who had some familiarity with the Armenian massacres since he had read Lepsius. He offered consolation, adding that the good Christian was meant to pass this vale of tears and should be prepared to drink life's bitter cup to the dregs, as he put it, in order to merit a place in heaven. Tehlirian told him he could not read German, and asked that the chaplain obtain an Armenian Bible in place of the one he had brought. Later, the Armenian Bible was delivered.

Tehlirian sat on his bunk recalling the words of the chaplain. A million martyrs had drunk from the bitter cup of life. Was this not enough? How much bitterness could life's cup hold? He opened the Bible at random to find His answer, and Chapter 13 of Revelations was revealed. Tehlirian read St. John's message:

*"And I stood upon the sand of the sea. And I saw a beast rise up out of the sea, having seven heads and ten horns, and upon his horns ten diadems, and upon his heads the name of blasphemy . . .*

*And these was given unto him a mouth speaking great things and blasphemies; and authority was given unto him to continue forty-two months.*

*And he opened his mouth in blasphemy against God, to blaspheme His name and*

*His tabernacle and them that dwell in Heaven.*

*And it was given unto him to make war with the saints and to overcome them; and authority was given him over all kindreds, and tongues, and nations . . .*

*If any man have an ear, let him hear.*

*He that leadeth into captivity shall go into captivity; He that killeth with the sword, must be killed with the sword. Here is the patience and the faith of the saints."*

Tehlirian pondered. The seven-headed monster, bearing on his heads the name of blasphemy, who for forty-two months had blasphemed against God, His tabernacle, and His saints . . . who had made war for forty-two months against all kindreds and tongues and nations . . . this monster was truly Talaat. And the Armenian massacres had lasted for exactly forty-two months. And St. John had said, "He that killeth with the sword, must be killed by the sword. . . this is the patience and faith of the saints." And Tehlirian prayed once more to the God of the Armenians committing himself to His hands for having been the instrument of His vengeance — His sword which must kill those who had killed with the sword.

Again, Tehlirian was called to the interrogation room. Some people were there to meet him, including an Armenian priest who greeted him with the nasal chant of his church asking that "In the name of Our Lord, Jesus Christ, God bless this young man who had exacted revenge against the monster Talaat." He said he was on his way to Rome, to beg the Pope's blessings and intervention on behalf of this young saint. When the German official interrupted to say that conversing in a foreign language during this interview was not permitted, the priest smiled, gave Tehlirian a crucifix, blessed him again, and departed. Tehlirian felt certain the

priest, with his patriarchal dignity, was St. John reincarnated.

The interrogators had completed most of their work, their notations bulging with data. These would be presented to the prosecution. The defense attorneys now had the opportunity of interviewing Tehlirian for the preliminary examination. The chief of the defense council was Dr. Adolph von Gorton, and Tehlirian's life depended on this man who was one of the finest legal minds in Germany at that time. When they first met, Hazor was with von Gorton, as interpreter. It was so good to see him, but Tehlirian admonished him for being so reckless. If he were recognized by the Turks, there was no telling how the prosecution would handle the association of the two men in trying to prove an organized plot on Talaat's life. When von Gorton had briefed himself with the general aspects of the case, an opportunity presented itself for Hazor to fill in some of the gaps in Tehlirian's knowledge of the aftermath following the assassination.

Hazor had kept Ouhlandstrasse under surveillance when suddenly Behaddin Shekir was contacted by one of his cohorts, and both men hurried in the direction of Number 4, Hardenburgstrasse. Hazor knew immediately that something had happened from the excited demeanor of the two, and he learned what it was as they neared the crowd gathered around Talaat's corpse. The police on guard allowed no one to get too close to the body, but an official, recognizing Behaddin Shekir motioned him to approach and identify the body. Hazor said he got a good look at the fiend. The bullet had entered slightly below the left ear, traversed the brain, and had come out of the right top of the skull.

As Shekir covered the face of the corpse, the German official approached and offered his sympathies, Hazor said. Shekir thanked him, but added that sympathies were so

futile . . . with Talaat's death, the hopes of the Ittihad Party also died. Talaat was everything . . . the Party itself. Of course, he added, the assassin must be an Armenian. The officer agreed, saying the enraged crowd would have lynched the assassin if the police had not arrived in time. Dr. Jacque, the German Foreign Minister had been requested to come and also identify the body. The good doctor had done so and offered his condolences to Shekir. Shekir was polite and correct, and asked the good doctor when the body would be removed and the latter ascertained through the help of the official that no special permission would be needed from the District Attorney's office . . . the mayor had been notified and the corpse would be removed as soon as a municipal ambulance or hearse was available, all of them being in use elsewhere that day. Shekir grew visibly irritated. "What do you mean available?" he asked testily. "Do you mean you cannot make some special arrangement? How long will the body remain here in the gutter? Is this proper respect for your government to show by allowing your faithful ally to remain for hours this way on the street?" Dr. Jacque was embarrassed and tried to explain the red-tape which caused the delay. In trying to make amends, he further complicated the issue by suggesting to Shekir that if he were willing to pay for it, a private hearse might be rented immediately. Shekir stalked away incensed.

Hazor continued his report. He now clarified why the crowd had attacked Tehlirian. Talaat had a striking resemblance to the German war hero, General von Kappen. One or two people in the crowd had mistaken the identity, and in the confusion, the mob had pursued Tehlirian in order to apprehend what they thought was the murderer of their compatriot. Hazor, completing his report, agreed with Tehlirian that since he had

such close connections with the Turkish students and was so closely involved in the case, it would be best not to be seen in Tehlirian's presence again. He left.

Four days later, Herr Wertenhauer, second defense attorney for Tehlirian, interviewed him. The interest which Wertenhauer showed was involved with Tehlirian's personal life and his personal reasons for the assassination. With Wertenhauer was Vaza, who, after the attorney's interview had ended, was allowed to remain alone briefly with Tehlirian and he brought Tehlirian up to date with more information. For five days, Talaat's corpse was not buried . . . his colleagues had tried to make arrangements for burial in Istanbul but the Turkish Government had refused, stating it would be an indiscretion in view of the fact that the European press, in playing up the sensational Tehlirian case, was beginning to bare the details of the official policy behind the Armenian massacres.

Vaza added, however, that many German newspapers were giving a *carte blanche* to Berlin's Turkish officialdom to write inflammatory articles denouncing the Armenians in general. The Armenians in Berlin were compelled to buy newspaper space and defend their position with documented quotations proving the Ittihad guilt behind this most heinous crime of the twentieth century. Number 4 Hardenburgstrasse was surrounded by a huge crowd of mourners at 10:00 A.M. on the day of the funeral. Newsreel cameras, commentators, officials, flowers, and official escorts . . . it was a complete picture of homage to Talaat. His assassination had become an international sensation. Shukri Effendi of the Turkish Embassy led the Moslem ritual and prayer chant. "Here lies Talaat Pasha, man of high principles and a servant of Allah. Is there anyone here who says contrary to this?" "No," roared the crowd.

At 11:30 A.M. the wake began to move

through Berlin's most crowded streets . . . it was impossible for the most unknowing citizen not to become aware that here was something important, and the Turks spared no pain to develop a favorable public reaction to their cause. The official escort arrived at the cemetery followed by an honor guard of two hundred or so Islamic students, some carrying the emblem of the Ittihad Party. Among the countless flower wreaths, one of the most obvious was from the German Foreign Ministry and another from the Turco-Germanic Alliance Group. There were many dignitaries present including the Afghan Delegation, the Turkish Naval Minister Mahmoud Mukhtar Pasha, the German representation of Gebberd, von Zimmermann, Gulemann, General von Zekt, General Greschishstein, the director of the German National Bank, Guerner, von Oppenheim, von Schulenburg (representing the state) and countless other state dignitaries, officials, and the like. Some of these spoke eloquently, all expressed their sympathies.

Shekir was barely able to speak, so overcome with remorse was he. Somewhere during the eulogizing, the speeches clearly became political polemics. Abdul Gadr, a poet, raised his clenched fist and called on the faithful to wreak vengeance, and the Islam members of the crowd swore to it with lusty yells. Herr Guenther, ex-president of the German-Anatolian Railway addressed the crowd, saying among other things, "It is impossible to commend the dead by their contemporaries. This will be done with the pen of history. We Germans in our hearts glorify this great personage." The President of the Turco-Germanic Alliance Group, Herr Jeckog placed a wreath on the casket bearing a ribbon with the inscription "To a great statesman and loyal friend" He sincerely hoped the spirit of Talaat would be



eternally alive in the future of Turkish-German friendship, he said. All in all, it was an impressive ceremony. Its touching details were flashed to the press of the world. No one said anything about the million martyred Armenians . . . butchered by Talaat's orders.

By the end of May, all interrogations, preliminary hearings, reviews, and medical examinations had been completed. The trial was about to begin.

### THE TRIAL

At 9 o'clock on the morning of June 2nd, 1921, the trial began. Dr. Lemberg, with two assistants, presided; Dr. Kolnig, the shrewd, brilliant attorney, led the prosecution; von Gorton led the defense with the assistance of his colleagues Wertenhauer and Niemeyer; Vaza and Kalousdian were the translators, and the jury of twelve persons were selected.

Tehirian was escorted into the courtroom and took his place on the prisoner's dock. He gazed around. The courtroom was packed . . . part of the crowd was forced to wait outside, milling about with curiosity. Tehirian looked at the crowd. Here and there he recognized a few people — Frau Tiedmann and Frau Stelbaum were there, so was his teacher Fraulein Bailunzon, and the Terzibashians, Eftian, and Apelian. In the witness stand was a woman, dressed in black, and for a moment her eyes met Tehirian's and she was filled with hate . . . it was Talaat Pasha's wife. No sooner had President Lemberg called the court to order, than Dr. von Gorton requested special permission from the court to invite Dr. Johannes Lepsius, authority on Turkish-Armenian affairs, and General Liman von Sanders, German Chief of Staff in charge of military liaison with the Turkish High Command. Dr. Kolnig quickly noted that the crime had not taken place in Armenia,

but he would concede to the defense council's request. Pres. Lemberg instructed the nineteen witnesses to take their oath and leave the courtroom until called. He also excused Talaat's wife since a mistake had been made. Earlier, it was thought she was the woman who had fainted when Talaat fell dead . . . but it turned out to be another case of mistaken identity. She was not, therefore, a witness. Soon, Lepsius and von Sanders arrived.

The murmuring ceased in the courtroom and all eyes focused on Tehirian, who, through his interpreter, began his statement in response to Pres. Lemberg's request. He quickly described his place of birth, his family, and his return to Erzinga where he witnessed the desolation of his home, and learned of the destruction of his family and the Armenian population. He then told of his wanderings and, in answer to the question, stated he became convinced Talaat was the author of the Armenian massacres when he read the Turkish government's own denunciation of him in the newspapers in Istanbul.

Pres. Lemberg then asked the inevitable question, "Are you guilty of the murder of Talaat Pasha?" The courtroom sat in tense silence. Tehirian squared his shoulders, raised his head and with deliberation said, "I am not guilty. I have murdered Talaat Pasha, but I am not a murderer. He is. I have lived only to avenge my people." It was the collective answer of the Armenian nation uttered through the instrument of its justice . . . Soghomon Tehirian. It was the answer which typified him and his people. It became the motto by which the press of the world was to remember him some forty years later when his obituary was written. It was the indictment of the Turk and the exoneration of the Armenian.

Pres. Lemberg called on the witnesses, all of whom agreed substantially to the details of the assassination. Charlottenburg's

Chief of Police, Gnass, testified that in his opinion the act must have been done with pre-meditation. Frau Stelbaum and Frau Tiedmann testified that Tehlirian had impressed them as a young man of fine character. Slowly, the cross-examination began to establish the fact of premeditation. Herr Schultzen, who had conducted the preliminary hearing of March 16, was called to the stand. He said he remembered exactly how young Tehlirian had confessed to the crime with full knowledge of what he was doing, and with pre-meditation to kill in cold blood. He added that Tehlirian even admitted having brought a revolver with him for the express purpose of avenging the massacre of the Armenian people. This was clearly a political assassination resulting from the strained relationships between Armenians and Turks. Tehlirian himself had said so.

Kalousdian interrupted. He pointed out to the court that Tehlirian was so groggy from the vicious assault of the mob he was in no position to make lucid statements. The words of a man in that condition should never have been accepted as testimony, which is precisely why he, Kalousdian, had refused to sign the transcript.

Schultzen admitted that Tehlirian was badly beaten, but his answers seemed perfectly lucid to him, he said. Pres. Lemberg asked Schultzen if such questioning under the conditions was entirely fair. Did they give a true picture? Niemeyer leaped to his feet. He pointed out that in the transcript, Schultzen, although he could have meant well, had asked Kalousdian, "How could you bring chocolates to such a cold-blooded murderer?" Kalousdian had retorted, "What murderer? Tehlirian is a hero . . . a great man." Dr. von Gorton seized the context. He pointed out that obviously Kalousdian was biased. His interpretation could have only biased Schultzen; therefore, Schultzen could have

little of objective value in the transcript of those hearings. Even his own statements proved that. He argued that Schultzen's testimony could have no validity . . . Tehlirian's pre-meditation and his political motives yet remained to be established. He moved that Schultzen's testimony be dropped as inadmissible evidence. Pres. Lemberg agreed. The defense had won a minor, but important, first round.

Since Tehlirian had made some comments about the systematic destruction of the Armenians, Mrs. Terzibashian was called to the stand to testify further on this score; she had some first-hand experiences of her own.

She said she was a native of Erzeroum and in June of 1915 the entire population of the city had been ordered to leave for military and strategic reasons. It soon became apparent, however, that only the Armenians were found in the caravans leaving the city. In eight days, four groups had left Erzeroum. There were 500 families, each averaging about twenty persons, in her group. When they neared the town of Papert (they had been told they were going to Erzinga), they noticed with increasing frequency, piles of corpses. They grew frightened and their suspicions were confirmed. The mobs soon beset them and axed to death many members in her group. Of twenty-one members in her family, she witnessed the butchery of eighteen of them. Pres. Lemberg's eyes grew wide with horror and disbelief.

Those who remained were mercilessly pushed on, without water. On the way, 500 young men were selected and butchered, their bodies thrown into a river. Thirty police and a brigade of soldiers continued goading, with bayonets, the remainder until they arrived at Malatia. They were not allowed to enter the town. Instead, they were driven to the mountains. The men were separated from the

women. Less than ten yards from her, Mrs. Terzibashian said, the remaining men were axed to death. The women and girls were raped. Those who resisted were bayoneted in the thighs. The pregnant women were stabbed in their bellies.

The growing murmurs of horror and disbelief throughout the courtroom during Mrs. Terzibashian's testimony became an uproar at this point. The gavel rang hard and loud for several moments until order was restored. The judge asked that the witness complete her testimony. Mrs. Terzibashian related how the soldiers made them fall on their knees and pray for Enver Pasha's long life and health, thanking him for being allowed to remain alive thus far. Eventually, Mrs. Terzibashian said, she managed to escape to Samsek. She was now without a family, a home, or a country. As the audience continued whispering with horrified amazement, Niemeyer interrupted by saying he could understand the incredulity of the people who just heard this testimony, but he had in his possession documents of several hundred eye-witnesses testifying to similar occurrences. He asked that Lepsius and von Sanders be called to give their testimony.

One can only guess at the personal thoughts which must have gone through the mind of Dr. Johannes Lepsius as he took the stand to testify. Perhaps he did consider his appearance there not only as a telling blow for Armenia's cause, but as a personal victory over his own critics. Certainly, he was the epitome of thorough German scholarship, and one of the greatest of all authorities on the Turkish-Armenian subject. His writings about the inhuman treatment of the Armenians by the Turks had proved embarrassing to German authorities because of Germany's alliance with Turkey. Censorship and a hostile press had done much to suppress

Lepsius's devastating documentation of the atrocities. Ultimately, he was virtually forced to leave Germany in order to complete his classic work "BERICHT UBER LAGE DES ARMENISCHEN VOLKES IN DER TURKEI." The addendum to this work was the immortal "DEUTCHLAND UND ARMENIAN" . . . the classic statement of the problem. He had it printed immediately after the War, complete with documents from the German Ministry of Foreign Affairs. His critics were powerless to stop the truth which Lepsius exploded like a bomb that afternoon.

He began with a description of the Young Turks, outlined the geographical areas inhabited by 1,850,000 Armenians, and documented how 1,400,000 Armenians were deported. Carefully adjusting his pince nez, he asked, "What does all this mean? In the order signed by Talaat, it is said 'The purpose of the deportation is annihilation.' And according to this order, the plan was executed. From the Anatolian States, only 10% of the totally deported population reached their destinations. The remaining 90% were killed on the way. Women and girls were raped and assaulted by the police and Kurds, and the rest died from hunger and exhaustion. Those Armenians from Eastern Anatolia, Cilicia, and Northern Syria were concentrated on the borders of the deserts by the thousands. They were exterminated mostly by systematic starvation and massacre. When these places of concentration were filled with new groups so that there was no further room, they were led, group by group, towards the desert and butchered . . . What I am saying comes directly from the Imperial Embassy and from the reports of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, especially from the reports of the German Embassy and German ambassadors . . . The occurrences cannot be doubted. The modes of implementation are similar



everywhere to Mrs. Terzibashian's testimony. It might be asked: How is it possible in such a short period of time to kill a million people? This was possible thanks to the utilization of the most bestial means imaginable as they were revealed in the Istanbul trials which took place against Talaat Pasha and his comrades."

"The Turkish military tribunal on July 6, 1919, sentenced to death the main authors of the massacres . . . Talaat, Enver, Djemal, and Dr. Nazim. The order to exterminate the Armenians was issued from Istanbul and delivered to the provincial governors of states and county administrators. Those officials who refused to execute the orders were fired from office, as for example, the Governor of Aleppo, Djelal Pasha. Talaat fired him and sent him to Konya. Here, Djelal Pasha took under his protection those Armenians who were still alive. Again he was expelled and remained without further office. Yet he was one of the most valuable and just men Turkey ever had. Another governor, Rashid Bey, ordered the execution of two county administrators who refused to carry out the orders of annihilation . . . The German Ambassador Roessler . . . contributed a great deal in saving the Armenians of Aleppo. General Liman von Sanders in Izmir opposed the deportation of the Armenians, as did Field Marshall von der Goltz, who declared to the governor of Mosul that he was forbidding the deportation, and when this was opposed he submitted his resignation. Enver Pasha was compelled to give ground, and added that his (von der Goltz's) authority in the High Command did not give him the right to interfere with policies of the Turkish Government . . . When the Russians advanced . . . and then retreated, they took the Armenians of Lake Van with them, but not because they loved them. Yanoushevich, Chief of Staff of Nicholai Nicholaiovich,

Supreme Commander of the Caucasus, declared that the Armenian lands would be re-populated with Kurdish and Cossack colonies in order to have an 'Armenia without the Armenians.' One reluctantly asks himself: How can such historical events become possible? The Armenian question is not a spontaneously developed growth, but the birth of European diplomacy. The Armenian nation was the sacrifice between the conflicting interests of Russia and England. Between the London and St. Petersburg chess game, the Armenian was a pawn which was sometimes advanced and sometimes sacrificed. Humanitarian platitudes and 'Christian protection' are only pretexts . . . The diplomatic games between competing states brought the question to such a point that first Hamid and then the Young Turks became suspicious of the Armenians and concluded that there was nothing to do but exterminate them . . . according to the reports of the *Journal Officiel*, the exile was decided by the Young Turk Committee and Talaat Pasha, the soul of the Committee and its most influential person, who ordered the annihilation."

Lepsius had spoken for more than an hour. As he concluded his systematically constructed indictment of Talaat and Turkey, the courtroom once again burst into an uproar of anger and indignation. This time, fewer people could be heard expressing disbelief. The prosecutor, von Kolnig, wiped his brow with dismay, von Gorton frankly expressed he had no idea as to the extent of the massacres, and Dr. Lemberg, the President of the Court, stammered a bit, momentarily losing his composure, not knowing what to say or do next.

Some minutes after, when order was restored, General Liman von Sanders took the stand. He had been personally appointed by the Kaiser as Chief of the Military Delegation to Istanbul in 1913 for the

re-organization of the Turkish Army and the supervision of the draft three months before Turkey entered the War. After a few preliminary remarks, he got to the point. Yes, he had to agree with Lepsius that the entire Turkish government must take the blame for the policy of deportation. However, the government could be blamed only partially for the consequences. He pointed out that before the War, Turkey had an excellent police force of 85,000 members, well-trained and well-disciplined but they were absorbed into the regular army. In their place was established an auxiliary force composed of lesser elements . . . criminals, opportunists, and those otherwise unfit. Therefore, discipline was impossible to maintain. It wasn't the Turkish soldiers who practiced the mutilations and atrocities, but the substitute police force. These simply took matters into their own hands resulting in consequences not necessarily intended by the government when it gave its deportation order.

He went on to say, "After all, we cannot overlook the fact that the administration was partially affected by the idea of a holy war, and considering the Armenians as Christian, naturally felt that treating them harshly was religiously sanctioned . . . So far as I know, the German Government did its best to alleviate the miseries of the Armenians as much as conditions would allow. But this was difficult. Specifically, I know that Ambassador Wolf-Metternich had directed strong protests to the government concerning the arrangements it had made for the Armenians. For us, since we underwent a great deal of suspicion, I can say not one single German officer participated in the arrangement against the Armenians. On the contrary, we intervened whenever it was possible. I must emphasize I never received any orders signed by Talaat regarding the Armenians. My orders were signed by Enver which

were routine and sometimes incoherent or illogical . . . as for example, when I received orders to remove from the Officer Corps all Armenians and Jews . . . since we needed them for translators . . . When the Governor of Izmir had 600 Armenians taken out of their beds in the middle of the night to be loaded into wagons for deportation, I threatened to have his police officer shot if he harmed one Armenian. The Governor was compelled to rescind the order . . . I would like to emphasize that I have not been to Armenia . . . nor have I been counseled by the Turks about the means and methods they were going to take against the Armenians. On the contrary, everything was concealed from us so that we would not have any idea about internal political occurrences. The accusations of the foreign press are that we participated in those measures. On the contrary, according to our obligations, we intervened whenever possible. . . . I do not know to what extent Talaat had participated in those measures against the Armenians. The implementation of that policy, as I have said, was done by the governors and the officials under them, and worst of all, at the hands of the gendarmerie. Under any conditions, I consider it my duty to say that during the five years when I was in Turkey, I did not receive any orders signed by Talaat about which I can testify related to the Armenians, or that such orders were ever given."

Von Sanders wiped his lips with his handkerchief and settled back in his chair, his testimony completed. Several things had become obvious by this time. Soghomon Tehlirian had almost been forgotten. The issue, for all practical purposes, had become the guilt or innocence of the Turkish Government in general, and of Talaat Pasha, in particular . . . not of Tehlirian, for the moment. True, the defense council was a little disappointed in

von Sanders' watered-down testimony wherein he believed the government was guilty of the policy, but that subordinate echelons were guilty of the implementation . . . which clearly tried to whitewash the government's responsibility. But von Sanders was on the spot. As he testified, the foreign press, fairly or unfairly, had tried to involve Germany in the massacres. Both he and Lepsius offered evidence to clear the German name of such charges. As a ranking general, deep in Turkey's military machine, von Sanders was vulnerable to criticism. In obviating such a possibility, he naturally tried to spare his Turkish colleagues in the military, by shifting the blame to the subordinate officials.

If von Gorton sensed von Sanders' personal reasons for white-washing the Turkish High Command, he spared him from a blistering attack. But he did seize upon the general's logic-chopping. With carefully chosen words, he addressed the general. "Most honorable sir," he said, "although you are not definite, you imply that the responsibility of the slaughter belonged to the subordinates . . . You leave our conscience in a turmoil. You say that Talaat is not responsible, but rather, the undisciplined committees to whom his orders were given to execute the deportations. The understanding among Armenians, in general, and of Dr. Lepsius, in particular, is contrary to your implication. Therefore, I consider it my duty to present to the court five telegrams in my possession, originally received by the Governor of Aleppo. Of these, I would like to read two of them which Dr. Lepsius has already examined . . . These telegrams categorically prove Talaat personally gave those orders to annihilate all Armenians, including children. Previously, he had given orders to spare those children too young to remember their parents, but later, in March, 1916, this order was rescinded

and even such children were considered a dangerous element to Turkey . . . I believe the Jury understands and feels that Tehlirian had the unconditional belief that Talaat was, in fact, the real author of those massacres. If there is any belief to the contrary, I want to read those telegrams which establish this fact of Talaat's authorship."

Dr. Kolnig immediately objected, saying Tehlirian, not Talaat, was on trial. Besides, he conceded that in Tehlirian's mind Talaat had been defined as responsible.

President Lemberg allowed the attorneys to comment on the testimony. Von Gorton hammered home the point that it was wishful thinking on the part of anyone to blame officials for the policy, but to shift the blame to subordinates for the way in which the policy was carried out. The prosecution's Dr. Kolnig contended that on logical grounds alone, it would be absurd to assume that Talaat was solely responsible. He agreed with von Gorton that in Tehlirian's mind, Talaat was defined as the real author of the genocide, even if this were not objectively true. Kolnig had no argument about this. On the contrary, he contended, this is precisely wherein Tehlirian's motivation lay, making him guilty. Niemeyer countered that Talaat, as Grand Vizier of Turkey, was objectively, and factually, the real author of the crimes, and it would be ridiculous to think otherwise.

The opinions of the medical and psychiatric authorities were then heard. Dr. Stoemer testified first. In his considered opinion, he said, the accused committed the crime because of a sudden explosion of "vital impulses" arising from long-repressed tensions. These tensions had been aggravated by his dizziness and black-out spots. This was all characteristic of certain epileptoid types with definite organic causes producing a rather rare

character type wherein once a plan had been conceived it would be compulsively carried out to its execution . . . no matter what the cost. However, the doctor added, none of this in any way deprived the accused of his free will and volition. And, of course, he added, the Turkish extermination of the Armenians, which so shocked the conscience of the civilized world, also left some effect on the mind of the accused!

Professor Liebmann was called to the stand next for his considered opinion. The accused, he said, was a very sincere young man, with deep spiritual pain, with attitudes of the finest altruism. His personal losses had created in his unconscious a revenge motive. He was so dominated by this desire for revenge in order to satisfy his idealism that he was compulsive in his act. He was practically unable to control his will and had little mastery over it. The good professor was convinced that the accused sincerely did not care if he continued to live so long as he could attain his goal. There was no doubt that the accused was not insane and suffered from no organic causes. "Spiritual disturbances" were behind his act.

Professor Kassirer, whom Tehlirian had visited, agreed substantially with the good Dr. Liebmann, adding his own elaborations, but still agreeing substantially with the good Dr. Liebmann. Doctors Bruno Hagen and Edmund Foerster agreed sometimes more, sometimes less, with the former three . . . their main contribution was that, if anything, the accused was completely bereft of any and all free will and volition during the commission of the act.

The courtroom sat in ponderous silence, trying to digest the deep learning, displayed by the specialists. The jury looked rather puzzled. Tehlirian, of course, suppressed his desire to blurt out that none

of them had given a proper diagnosis because it was impossible for them to do so for a very simple reason . . . not one of them was an Armenian. Pres. Lemberg stated that no further testimony would be heard, announced 9 o'clock tomorrow morning as the time when court would reconvene, and gaveled the session to a close.

Tehlirian wrestled with his soul that night in his cell. Could he honestly say there were indications that he would be found guilty or not? No. He would wait the morrow to see what fate had in store. He tossed and twisted for a long time, but sleep, when it finally came, brought the horrors of another nightmare . . .

Vastness. Expanse, dark purple. Horizon and land are singleness. Dunes, sand, dark sand, dark dunes . . . everywhere. Walk, No. Run, run. The sand, ankle deep, it clings, the dunes all around, the dark dunes . . . **THEY ARE NOT DUNES, THEY ARE DEAD BODIES**, covered with sand. The Armenian dead . . . sand dunes, by the ten, the hundreds, the thousands. Black, dark, as far as the eye sees. "Soghomon, Soghomon" . . . the voice, how weak, how pained. "Mother? Mother . . . where, where . . . are . . . you?" "Here, here my son . . . you've come, I knew you'd come. I knew. Cold, son, it is cold. Cover me, please cover me." "Yes, mother, yes." Cover. Quick. Sand, push it, scrape it, sand, cover mother, cover her, warm, keep her warm. Easy . . . careful . . . the bayonet wounds, her side. Gently, cover her breasts gently . . . how gently once they fed you life. Sand. Sand . . . cover her. "Enough, my son, enough . . . my face, do not cover it. Breathe, I must breathe. Thank you, my son." "Are you all right, now, mother?" "Yes, my son . . . warm, I am warm now. Go. Please go . . . go home, sleep. You are tired. Father, tell him I wait." Sand, Dunes. Darkness, the Armenian dead . . . dead . . . dead . . . dead.

The court was even more solidly packed than yesterday. The session opened with Pres. Lemberg instructing the jury that the prosecution and defense would sum up. It was up to the jury to decide on one of three conditions: Was the crime intentional without pre-meditation, or was it with pre-meditation? And if it were the former, what mitigating circumstances, if any, could be found?

Dr. Kolnig began to sum up for the prosecution. He referred to the War, to the international aspects of this case, and to the fact that all civilization was watching Berlin to see German justice carried out. Then, he said, "An anonymous man . . . a name out of the crowd suddenly raises a hand and slays another man, who during the last great struggle of War, carried the destiny of his country . . . who was also an ally of Germany, who had arisen to heights of fame and glory." Kolnig cleared his throat, paused for a moment, and continued, "Was the act pre-meditated . . . or not? When I ask myself that question, another question arises, naturally. What reasons motivated the accused to commit his act? There is no doubt that we are dealing with a political assassination. The motivations of the accused have been his political hatred and his desire for political vengeance." Thus, Kolnig began to construct his case, bit by bit, with the touch of a master craftsman. Tehlirian, as he stood in the dock, recalled the words of Levine: If you are convicted for political reasons, the penalty is death.

Kolnig continued. He said he gave more credence to von Sanders' opinions, thereby absolving the government of the methods used by the subordinates for carrying out the policy. He added that the Istanbul Government had proof the Armenians planned to double-cross Turkey in establishing their national independence. He called attention to the his-

torically bloody past of Asia Minor, and the fact that blood-baths, being common occurrences, should be understood as a normal social phenomenon in that part of the world. The Armenian massacres, though inexcusable, were a part of all that. He denounced the validity of the proofs offered by the defense, arguing that forgery, collusion, and fiction were probable. He discounted the testimony of the eye-witness, stating he personally knew of other witnesses who could be asked to appear, and who would give contradictory evidence. He questioned the integrity of the Turkish Government's trial of the Ittihad Party leaders, thereby casting doubts on the accuracy of the findings which proved the latter's guilt.

Finally, Kolnig pulled his ace out of the hat. He knew the defense counsel would invoke article 51 of the German Penal Code which clearly held that a man could not be guilty of premeditated crime, if during its commission, he was acting unconsciously, compulsively, or was insane. Kolnig paused, and then continued, deliberately pronouncing his words to the jury. "It is self evident," he said, "that if all the medical specialists agreed in their diagnosis, your judgement could be more easily formed. Unfortunately, they do not agree, thereby leaving the final opinion up to you. Since you must decide, the question we must ask ourselves is not necessarily the meaning of the 51st article in so far as it defines pre-meditation, but whether or not it can be applied in this case. In this event, we must examine the personality of the accused as he was observed during this trial."

Kolnig then continued to answer his own question. He said, "In my opinion, he has left the impression that he was fully conscious during every moment of this trial. His answers have been appropriate, concise, and rational. All opinions expressed



about him indicate a normal past. I must agree, therefore, with those who would reject the applicability of the 51st article. Gentlemen, our law basically provides that there can be no mitigating circumstances for a pre-mediated crime. I know that if I ask you to consider his crime as pre-mediated, you may think this too severe. But, gentlemen of the jury, we must not only consider the criminal. We must also consider the victim who was in the prime of life, whose death is being grieved by his kin and his compatriots among whom he enjoyed great fame. Of course, you will consider all these things. Therefore, gentlemen of the jury, I am obligated to give a positive answer to the questions put to you by the President of the Court. I must demand the death sentence for the accused."

There was a deep silence in the room. Kolnig dabbed his brow with his handkerchief and sat down. He had presented an able argument, with logic, and force. It was now von Gorton's turn.

Dr. von Gorton restricted his argument to the legal implications surrounding the 51st article. After his preliminary remarks to the president, he turned to the jury and said, "Gentlemen, I have here a mountain of documented evidence, including telegrams which prove conclusively Talaat's guilt. There are also witnesses. But I purposely choose not to invoke these again to save time. I simply desire to remind you that of 1,800,000 Armenians, 1,400,000 were deported, and of these 1,000,000 were slaughtered in cold blood. Is this not proof enough that such a monstrous crime has taken place? Do you, therefore, believe that a crime of such magnitude could take place without systematic planning? Is it really true that the Turkish Government did not intend this, or was unable to prevent this, if it so desired? Do you really believe that?" He

paused a moment, staring hard at the jury, allowing time for his questions to leave their impact.

After hammering home the guilt of Talaat, and the effect of the massacres and the loss of his family on Tehlirian, von Gorton skillfully dissected the medical testimony in the context of the 51st article. He said, "We are not dealing with the old Prussian law which defined pre-meditated murder as that in which the decision to kill was given at least fourteen days before the crime. We are dealing with modern law and our new legal code. In the new interpretation, the crucial question is: Was there pre-meditation at the moment the crime was committed? Subsequent clauses to the relevant article provide various guides for determining pre-meditation, which must consider a man's mental and emotional condition at the time of committing the crime. For there to be pre-meditation, the will must be free of inner compulsions or external pressure, or else there can be no free choice by the will and hence, no pre-meditation. Gentlemen, we must ask ourselves, therefore: Was Tehlirian free of anger, sorrow, the tragic memories of the past, the turmoil of conscience, the horror of certain mental images . . . at the split moment he committed his act? Gentlemen, it is not necessary for me to answer that question?"

Von Gorton continued, "As for the inner tensions, and psychological factors of which our learned consultants spoke, our legal physician, who is not a psychologist, Dr. Stoermer, says that in his opinion, the accused suffers from some kind of organically conditioned epilepsy, but that his free will and volition is not affected! Professor Liebmann says there is no organic epilepsy, but certain inner tensions and compulsions of a psychological origin arising from the past which make the accused an ill man, with little sense of re-

sponsibility. Professor Kassirer fundamentally agrees with both these views. Now for Dr. Foerster's views. In the beginning of his testimony, he agrees basically with his colleagues, but later says that on the basis of the latest psychological experiments, the accused could be mentally ill to a serious degree; but then, the good doctor concludes that he has doubts concerning the validity of these psychological experiments; hence, he doubts the mental illness of the accused." There was a slight snicker in the courtroom. Von Gorton paused for a moment. Then he continued.

"Now regarding Dr. Foerster's doubts, let me say this. . . The law will not accept doubts! It must be proved whether or not the accused was responsible. The slightest doubt his responsibility establishes his irresponsibility. In judicial procedure and logic, it is not sufficient to determine the issue on the basis of a negative judgement. You, gentlemen, have to prove he WAS responsible, in order to conclude his pre-meditation." Dr. von Gorton then continued by referring to previously established legal precedents wherein the Supreme Court had ruled that there is no free will, hence no responsibility, "when psychological disturbances, mental conditions, feelings, or unknown causes control the will so strongly that the decision of the accused cannot be logical." Dr. von Gorton then asked the jury, "Was Tehlirian able to make a logical decision, of his free will . . . was he the master of his will, when he grabbed his revolver and pursued Talaat? Two of the doctors say no . . . they cannot say he was responsible. The others are still in doubt. You must decide on this, gentlemen of the jury. When we consider these present times, let us accept the fact that ill-will exists between Turks and Armenians. In any event, remember that the blood of 1,000,000 Armenians was shed during the reign of Talaat Pasha, and if on

Hardenburgstrasse another drop of blood was added to this, let us be consoled with the thought that it could have been worse." With a few concluding statements, von Gorton brought his rebuttal to a close.

It was now Wertenhauer's turn. Where von Gorton had clarified, interpreted, and explained, Wertenhauer demanded with passion and fury. Berlin had not heard such a classic delivery. He got to the point immediately. "Gentlemen, when you get your ballots, you will be required to answer 'yes' or 'no' . . . 'guilty' or 'not guilty.' You will answer that the crime was NOT COMMITTED with pre-meditation. You will NOT answer whether the accused killed Talaat Pasha . . . but whether he was guilty for having done so. You will undoubtedly think that since a man has been killed, will not the law demand that the accused be punished? And yet, according to our German law, you must acquit the accused. We have no desire to defame German law the glory of which you represent. The entire world looks upon you. Your decision must be a decision so that a thousand years from now it will still be regarded as a decision based on right and justice . . . Our law states that it must be proved there were no external factors or compulsions motivating this crime. If there is any doubt in your minds . . . if you cannot prove that there were no such factors operating, you must acquit the accused."

Then Wertenhauer exploded. Not only was Tehlirian's life at stake, but the honor of the German people. In rebutting Kolnig, he said, "I categorically deny that Enver and Talaat were the guests of Germany. I categorically deny that our government would welcome such traitors who abandoned their fatherland, coming here under assumed names. I would have said nothing of the political implications if the prosecutor had not made an issue of it . . . if he

had not said that in Berlin, Germany's greatest ally was assassinated. That is not correct. Talaat and his colleagues were allies of the Prussian and German militarists . . . not the German people . . . Talaat may have been a good man personally, but he belonged to a group which gave that infamous decision. He did not have to wear a military uniform, but he was one of those who gave the decision and then carried the bloody flag of oppression. To deport an entire people is so fiendish an idea, it could be born only in the mind of a Talaat. If the real gendarmerie were in the regular army, and only irresponsible auxiliaries remained, he had no right to entrust his deportation scheme to them . . . and if he handed the authority to such people, then he is the author of that crime and responsible for its consequences."

"And even if the Armenians had allied themselves with other nations," he continued, "and even if they wanted national freedom, and even if they had planned 'treachery' . . . it was still the government who was responsible for butchering women, children, and men who planned no 'treachery.' Personally, I am opposed to capital punishment, but when such an order comes from such a fiend for 'strategic reasons' . . . who then refuses to assume the responsibility for the consequences, then I favor capital punishment and consider it just, for such a man. What 'strategic reasons' could there be for those countless, isolated villages inhabited by handfuls of defenseless Armenians? All this about 'strategic necessity' is sheer nonsense!"

Deviating a little into the historical factors, Wertenhauer continued. "On the morning of March 15, 1921, in the soul of the accused, there took place a reckoning . . . thousands of his martyred people demanded from him a final answer . . . Who

would have condemned William Tell, if instead of splitting the apple on his son's head, he split, instead, the heart of the tyrant with his first bolt? Is there anything more human . . . more understandable, than the assassination of this fiend, Talaat? Behold the accused! It is the avenger of one million people who stands here . . . it is one million people who stand here through their avenger against the responsible author of that crime. The avenger . . . it is he who came forth to represent the spirit of justice against oppression and tyranny. He represented humanity against inhumanity, he represented enlightened justice against dark injustice. He came forth representing the oppressed against the oppressor. He came forth as one million martyrs against one man, who, with others, shared the burden of that crime. He came forth as the representative of his parents, brothers, sisters, and yes, even for his two year old nephew."

"For a thousand years, the youngest child of Armenia has stood behind this man, carrying the banner of truth, vengeance, and humanity. He leaped against the fiend who gave the decision to desecrate the honor of his family, and ordered the rape and extermination of an entire nation. And now, gentlemen of the jury, YOU decide, if you can, what took place in his soul at the moment he committed his 'crime' . . . YOU decide if he was 'responsible' . . . and consider that the eyes of humanity are upon your decision, and those eyes are the eyes of justice!"

There was a restrained tremor in the room . . . it was improper to applaud, and the president had to call for order in stifling the applause that began to go up. Everything else which was uttered after that plea, was an anticlimax. Niemeyer was brief, merely asking the jury to consider that law and logic alone could never explain the truth, that the soul had its own



understanding. He added that it was inconceivable of a thing being morally right, but legally wrong. Tehlirian had done what he had because of a deep conviction that his act was morally just, that this was his only understanding, his only reality . . . that his will was not free, that he had to do this. He concluded, "I want you to ask yourselves what result your verdict will have. You must not consider the political aspects . . . you must consider the highest concepts of justice and humanity which give meaning to life, making it more bearable for all of us."

There was a brief period allowed for rebuttal. But it seemed as though restraint and professional courtesy were no longer present. It became a personal, hard-hitting battle of wits between counsel and prosecution. Kolnig accused the defense of dividing mankind into humanitarians and militarists. Wertenhauer insisted that the prosecution was confusing the issue which was not that a man had been killed, but rather the guilt or the innocence of the accused.

President Lemberg gavelled the rebuttals to a close. He then turned to the jury and in a solemn manner instructed them to retire to the chambers and reach their decision. The recessed court buzzed with suppressed excitement and tension. People milled about asking each other what the outcome might be, correspondents were quickly completing notes, some It-tihadists were agitatedly arguing here and there. The tensions had been great . . . the jammed courtroom was waiting to explode one way or another. Tehlirian? He stood there calmly. His mind was reviewing the memories of his friends, comrades, relatives . . . as though he might never see them again.

The jury was out for less than an hour. Pres. Lemberg got almost instant obedience as he gavelled for order. He invited the

foreman of the jury to present the verdict. A strand of falling cobweb would not have sounded louder in a pharaoh's tomb, than it would have in that Berlin court. The foreman stood and, deliberately controlling his voice, read from the form in his hand: "As to whether or not the accused, Soghomon Tehlirian, is guilty for having killed Talaat Pasha in Charlottenburg on March 15, 1921, I, Otto Reiniche, Chairman of the Jury, with honor and conscience, testify to the jury's decision — 'NO . . . NOT GUILTY!'"

It had been coming for some time so that nothing could hold it back. The courtroom exploded with a roar of approval and applause. The reporters raced out to flash the news to the press of the world. The chairman of the court did not even try to restore order. He simply gave his closing words over the uproar, signed the verdict, and announced the acquittal of the accused, with an order for immediate release. The crowd surged around Tehlirian waving, shouting, laughing, and crying. The bailiff had difficulty leading him through the crowd to the back room where his personal effects were returned to him, and final papers signed.

When Tehlirian stepped out again, he was visibly stunned. In the surrounding crowd he made out his friends. Suddenly, he found himself in the embrace of Mooshetzi Karekin . . . a long lost comrade, crying shamelessly with joy, embracing him, thumping his back. There were others who pressed in . . . Kalusdian, Eftian, and Apelian who led him through the maddened courtroom through a side door and into a waiting car. The street was packed with the wild crowd, and a ten-car escort led the hero's car down the street, cautiously, while people reached out to thump the fenders, wave, and yell. In the crowd, Tehlirian made out Frau Stelbaum and Frau Tiedmann . . . and his teacher

Frauliein Bailunzon, waving their handkerchiefs, crying with joy. It took some time before the cars drove clear of the crowds lining the streets for blocks, reached the main boulevards, and sped Soghomon Tehlirian to his waiting friends.

*(To be continued)*

# ***Creative Curiosity***

**P. K. THOMAJAN**

- *This is the mark of the progressive individual whose whole being is made up of probing feelers.*
- *It is using one's head as an ever-revolving searchlight that makes one a beacon of knowledge.*
- *It is constantly filling in data gaps and having more on tap.*
- *It is visual vigilance that is eye-cued to momentous minutiae in the surrounding scene.*
- *It is always being on the lookout for new things to look into.*
- *It is exploring every area for hidden treasures.*
- *It is the insatiable hunger for inspiration that is forever transcribing or tracking down worthwhile items to their source.*
- *It is ceaselessly enriching one's astuteness with every contact and call.*
- *It is the sign of the active mind always foraging for fresh food for thought.*
- *It is the fervent quest for omniscient awareness that makes one subtly attuned to the phenomena of life!*

# PARVANOUHI

BASED ON THE POEM 'PARVANA,' BY

HOVANESS TOUMANIAN

MAGDA HAROUT

A long, long time ago Moths were Men. Not just Ordinary men, but Extraordinarily Exceptional men. In fact they were Dukes, Lords, Barons and Earls; the elite of Parvanah.

Parvanah was once a lovely canton in the far-away land of Ararat. Sheltered by high mountains and nurtured by melting snows, it was blest with lush black earth and blue sparkling skies. A land of goat's milk and halvah.

Encircled by the verdant velvet of the countryside, stood the King's castle. The grateful populace had erected the alabaster palace as a tribute to their beloved, benevolent ruler. Each stone had been carved by loving hands and set into place with a prayer of good health for the King of Parvanah. He, in turn, was wise and just and issued sensible proclamations:

"For those this does concern; this schedule you must learn:

"Mondays and Tuesdays are prayer days; that's two. Wednesdays and Thursdays are work days; that's two. Fridays and Saturdays are play days; that's two. So six out of seven days you know what to do. Sundays are holidays. I leave them to you."

So as you can see, Parvanah was a happy land ruled by a gracious King. When the first heir was born there was rejoicing throughout the land. The nightingale sang at sunrise, the rooster crowed at sunset,

and the midnight jasmine bloomed at noon. It was decided that the infant should bear the name of the land that welcomed her so joyously.

Parvanouhi became the pride of Parvanah. As a small child she was like no other small child they had ever seen.

"Her cheeks are like peaches," boasted the farmers.

"Her lips are like roses," bragged the gardeners.

"May she never cry," wished the King. She stumbled but never fell. She bumped but never bruised.

As a young girl she was like no other young girl they had ever seen.

"She grows like a young birch," said the artists with awe.

"She sings like the mountain stream," said the musicians with wonder.

"May she never sigh," wished the King.

The sun cooled its rays before kissing her cheek, the wind calmed to a breeze before brushing her hair, and the fields hid the thistle from her feet.

As a Princess she was like no other Princess they had ever seen.

"She plucks the sweetest zither," admired the children.

"She weaves the softest cloth," marveled the mothers.

And she grew to maidenhood having never sighed a sigh nor wept a tear.

One glorious day messengers were sent racing throughout the land. Feast tables were set and fragrant garlands woven; Parvanouhi was to be betrothed. The King's latest proclamation was sounded across the country:

"For those this does concern, a kingdom you may earn:

I offer Parvanouhi's hand

To the finest youth in all the land.

Come prepared to show your best.

Come prepared to pass her test."

From North, East, South and West they came. They came by horse, by carriage, by foot. They came with bows, with jewels, with poems. They came with hope in their eyes and love in their hearts for the priceless Princess of Parvanah. Cheering citizens lined the streets and followed the braves as they made their way to the castle.

"Oh, how handsome!" sighed the girls.

"Ooooh how strong!" cried the boys.

"Aiii, how can she possibly choose!" nodded the grannies.

The sun knew how she would choose. So did the wind. For Parvanouhi cherished a secret desire she had confided to the two. The one who could fulfill it would win her heart and her hand.

The palace had been polished in honor of the coming guests. White doves were released from every turret and brilliant banners waved from every window. And when they arrived what a welcome they received! The King himself threw open the gates and then rushed off to fetch the Princess. The royal gardens had been converted to a gigantic, rose-strewn banquet hall, with long tables crowded with delicacies and wine. Perfumed garlands had been strung from tree to tree and interwoven to form exotic canopies to protect the revelers from the curious sun, who kept peeping anxiously between the blossoms. Elaborately costumed dancers waited restlessly to entertain, while musicians nerv-

ously tuned and re-tuned their instruments. Everything was in order. Everyone was ready.

Finally the heralds blazoned Parvanouhi's approach. She appeared at the terrace on her father's arm. The crowd grew silent, the youths starred as in a trance. She was so much more beautiful than they had dreamed. They stood spellbound. Only their hearts could be heard fluttering, like the wings of the doves overhead. The trance was broken by the King's command:

"Let the rivalry begin:

May the best young suitor win!"

So they began; all the Dukes, the Lords, the Barons and the Earls. They presented themselves to the Princess by turn, voicing their accomplishments and the feats they would perform for her hand.

"From buttercups I spin pure gold," said a Duke.

"Robes of gold upon demand!" nodded the King.

"There is no beast I cannot hold," said a Lord.

"The best furs in all the land," nodded the King.

"From any stone a jewel I mold," said a Baron.

"Priceless gems to grace your hand!" nodded the King.

"There is no tale I have not told," said an Earl.

"Imagination at your command!" nodded the King.

And so they continued till the last had spoken. Then the King nodded once again at the impatient youths and raised his hand high; the signal to begin the proof of the promises.

The breeze held its breath, the leaves stopped rustling, the doves softly folded their wings, and the eager crowd edged noiselessly forward. Suddenly the stillness was disturbed by a wistful sigh.



"She sighs," whispered the Dukes and Lords.

"She sighs," murmured the Barons and Earls.

"She sighed," gasped the King.

Parvanouhi had suffered her first sigh.

"Why do you sigh, light of my life?" asked the King in distress.

Parvanouhi raised her eyes sadly and answered quietly:

"I sigh, dear father, for I am sad.

A secret wish I've always had.

No other gift will bring joy to me.

The Flame of Eternal Love I wish to see."

Every brow clouded with sorrow to see the unhappiness on their beloved Princess' face.

"We already love you," shouted the youths.

"They already adore you," cried the grannies.

"Yes they do, I know they do," affirmed the King.

But Parvanouhi shook her head and sighed again.

"That may be so, but my own eyes must see.

"Won't someone bring love's flame to me?"

Dismayed at her sadness and fervent in their desire to win her favor, the young lovers vowed passionately:

"The Flame of Eternal Love, our quest shall be.

We will bring it back for you to see."

And they raced off by horse, by carriage, by foot; leaving their bows, their jewels, and their poems at her feet.

Everything was left intact for their return. The entire canton waited. The children played and watched along the East Road. The grannies knitted and watched along the West Road. The sun came and went many times. Finally the grannies shuffled home to warm their hands for the

summer was turning into fall. The youths did not return. The birds carried off the delicacies from the banquet tables, the wine turned to vinegar, and still they did not come.

"It's taking so long, where can they be?" asked the Princess.

"They may have had to cross the sea," answered the King. He watched from the North Tower, she from the South. But the roads remained empty and the horizon bare.

"Why don't they come, have they lost their way?" sighed Parvanouhi.

"Guardian Gargoyles they may have had to slay," assured her father.

The garlands withered and blew away, the banners hung in shreds of faded thread, yet still they did not come. Parvanouhi left the tower and passed the days wandering through the ghostly gardens.

"She cries," said the sun, drying her cheek.

"She cries," said the breeze, catching her tear.

And Parvanouhi shed her first tears. She sprinkled the rose till its petals hung heavy with salt. She filled the fountain till the doves complained.

"Why do you cry, light of my soul?" begged the King in dismay.

Parvanouhi raised her tear-filled eyes and sobbed:

"I know now, they've forgotten me."

"No, they're on their way, soon you shall see," insisted the broken-hearted father.

But Parvanouhi no longer listened. She lay in her room behind locked doors, beyond consolation. She wept till the room filled with her tears, till they streamed down through the palace halls. She cried till they swept over the gardens and flowed out onto the countryside. She sobbed till the valleys were hidden, till the land lay flooded beneath her grief. She wept till

she drowned and disappeared underneath a sea of sorrow.

There is a lovely lake in the far-away land of Ararat. It is sheltered by high mountains and surrounded by melting snows, yet its water is curiously salty. But for those who have heard of Parvanouhi, the lake holds no mystery. For when the water is calm, the sun bright, the castle of Parvanah can be seen at the bottom of the lake, shimmering in all its alabaster glory. It stands waiting for the Princess' suitors. But the elite of Parvanah, the Dukes, the Lords, the Barons, the Earls have yet to return.

They left Parvanah on that day long ago, not knowing where they would find the Flame, or when; knowing only that they would not return without it. Following the sun, the moon, the falling stars, they rushed madly from Highland to Lowland, from Desert to Sea.

They whipped their horses to thick white froth, till they could no longer run. They drove their carriages over gullies and rocks, till the wheels would no longer turn. Then, by foot they raced, till they fell exhausted to the ground.

"Oh, if we could only fly!" cried the Dukes and Lords.

"Yes, if we only could fly!" echoed the Barons and Earls.

And then somehow, in some wondrous way, their arms turned into wings. They flew up to the sky as Moths, to continue their frantic search.

As Moths they flew and are flying still, the youths of Parvanah. Beating their wings in wild frenzy, they try to capture every flickering flame to bring back to Parvanouhi. But neither Moth nor Man has captured the Flame of Eternal Love, and it seems most unlikely that they ever will.

# THE VOICE OF THE BLOOD

AGHAVNI KABAKIAN

## We Start the Long March

In that ill-fated year of the Armenian deportations I was a little girl of six. My sister Shakeh was two years younger than I, and my mother being dead, the two of us were under the care of my Grandmother. My father was affectionate to us and he exerted every effort so that we might be free of the privations of an orphan's life.

We two sisters not only were the legacy of our unfortunate mother, but the last comfort of our father who was a great lover of children. Before our arrival, he had lost three sons and this was an additional reason for our being the object of exceptional tenderness in the family.

We had a two story house in the midst of an orchard which was under my father's constant care. In front of the house a substantial plot of the land was reserved for a flower patch, originally cared for by my mother when she was alive, but after her death by my father who, now, turned the orchard to the gardener and himself took charge of the flowers. I now remember that he often, on moonlit nights, lingered late with the flowers, pruning them, bracing the stems, or crossbreeding them.

Each morning, taking us by the hand, my father took us as far as the kindergarten. We always carried each a colorful bouquet of flowers for our teacher.

Again, in the evenings it was our father who escorted us home. He had so arranged his business hours that he could devote the larger share of his time to the care of his children. On Saturdays and Sundays we always had a carriage at our disposal to drive in a promenade of neighboring villages in which, often he and my Grandmother accompanied us.

Thus, we were enjoying a perfect edenic life when in the summer of 1914, as in every Armenian center in the Ottoman Empire, the order came to deport also the Armenian population of Adapazar.

At that time our little brains could not comprehend what was going on. We were surprised hearing the wail and the lamentation around us. Our entire Armenian quarter of the city was afoot all night, readying for the coming journey. My Grandmother fidgeted around tying up bundles. My father was busy concealing money and jewelry in the folds of our clothing, and cheering up the relatives and the neighbors scurrying around.

I shall never forget that fateful morning. All of us up early, my father carefully shut the windows and the doors of the house. He watered the flowers for the last time and we all, each holding a bundle under the arm, stepped out into the street. All the inhabitants of our quarter of the city were ready for the journey. For the

first time in our lives we were witnessing such a multitude in motion. At that moment it seemed to dawn on us that this was something different from our ordinary excursions. But when the mounted police appeared on the scene, ordering the milling concourse to move, we began to get scared and wanted to know from father where they were taking us. He did not have time enough to answer, for the last time he looked back, scanned the house and the garden, picked up my little sister in his arms and we became merged into the concourse.

Only then did I notice that Shakeh, having taken her little doll with her, was pressing it to her breast. My eyes brimmed over and I asked my Grandmother to turn back and retrieve my own doll. My Grandmother bent over, kissed my cheeks, and promised, the moment we arrive at the first city, to buy a big one for me. The dolls in the city are big and so lovely, she assured me.

Our caravan presented an extraordinary spectacle. Many could not yet believe that they were being thrown out permanently from their family hearths, and, consequently, they had taken nothing along with them. There were others, on the contrary, who had hurriedly assembled whatever they could take with them. More realists plainly declared that they were marching straight to death. We children, listening to diverse conversations, changed our moods according to the nature of what we heard. There were moments when we thought we were going on a lark — one of our customary summer vacations. When we heard the sound of wails and lamentations, we had the impression of attending the funeral of some loved one.

This uncertainty did not, however, last long, because when we were out of the city quite a little ways, near the Village of Arifiyeh, armed peasants from the neighboring mountains appeared on the scene

who stopped the caravan right in sight of the gendarmes and started to rob it. Those who attempted to protest were beaten unmercifully. Many were surprised and tried to rely on the protection of the gendarmes. Later, when we were subjected to terrible tortures, that first looting seemed like a joke to us.

Now that, as a matured intellect, I recall the terrors which we witnessed on the road to exile, I begin to understand that even the pillage was converted into an organized system. The entire Turkish populace on the road had to benefit from the property of the passing caravans. This is the reason why the gendarmes interfered only when they saw that we would be stripped naked and there would be nothing left for the waiting Turks farther down the road. A few caravans succeeding us had had the good fortune of traveling by train as far as Konia and even Katma, and yet this distinction availed them nothing, for they, too, were doomed to perish in the end in the sands of Der-ez-Zor.

Our first stop was at the Village of Geyveh Aghazar. We had trekked for five hours and we were completely exhausted. My Grandmother tried to cheer me up, and when my little sister was too tired my father would carry her in his arms.

In Geyveh we had a change of gendarmes and officers who allowed us a brief rest, to resume our trek in the afternoon. However, it was not until evening when the caravan was ordered to move. The long rest had left us completely refreshed, smiles returned to the faces, and there were exchanges of cheering words. Some in the caravan who had managed to overhear the conversation of the officers in charge speculated that the caravan would camp at the village of Bilejik, a few hours of march away.

However, before arriving at Bilejik, in the mountains of Karakeoy, the gendarmes

gave the order to halt. The night already had overtaken us and a full moon beamed on the stilly nature. The commander of the gendarmes climbed on a high rock and announced that all the males would be separated, to be led into the mountains to work in the quarries.

There was a heart-rending cry from the whole caravan. The women began to cry and the little children hung on the necks of their fathers, reluctant to part. My Grandmother tried to persuade us to be calm. My father tried to keep his tears from us, promising to return to us in a few days.

This scene dragged on until the gendarmes gave the order to hurry, or else those who lagged behind would be killed on the spot.

I recall it to this day, how the men separated from the embrace of their loved ones, one after another, and ascended the opposite side of the mountain. My father kissed us for the last time, burst into tears on the breast of my Grandmother, and then, with swift steps, joined the gendarme who was waiting for him.

A beautiful moon was watching this tragedy with utmost indifference while the stars, like hot tear drops, hung there in the infinity of the sky.

### **The Journey and the Whip Begin to Take Their Toll**

The next morning, when we woke up, we heard voices of curses and wailing on all sides. We learned that many girls had been carried away during the night, including minors. My Grandmother immediately thought of devising ways and means to protect us from danger. A number of women suggested cutting off the girls' hair while others thought such a step would endanger their lives since the Turks intended to kill all the males. As the direct product of this consultation, my Grand-

mother hit upon the idea of disfiguring the faces and the legs of myself and my little sister. Soon they improvised chunks of charcoal, another woman suggested mixing the powdered charcoal with ground coffee. This recipe was at once telegraphed from one end of the caravan to the other. The danger lent ingenuity to us children who, together with my Grandmother, feverishly worked to destroy the curls of our hair and wallowed in the dirt in order to soil our clothes.

In the midst of this commotion a sudden cry turned our attention on a high ledge immediately above us, attracting the gendarmes to the spot. It soon became clear that a mother, her daughter in her arms, had thrown herself down the top of the ledge. We knew them as neighbors, both mother and daughter being known for their beauty in the entire city. Seeing they had lost their father and husband, and sensing that soon they would lose their honor, they had put an end to their lives by hurling themselves down the precipice.

This new pain of kidnapping of women and girls had stunned everyone. Every family already had lost the father and the sons and no one was sure that the men who were carried away under the pretext of working in the quarries would be kept alive. My Grandmother cried and beat upon her knees. My little sister Shakeh kept calling for father, while I, having taken the airs of a grown up girl, tried to comfort them both. Today, as I contemplate, I marvel how God could have given such strength to an eight year old little girl like myself.

When the caravan resumed the journey the women confided to one another that the larger part of the kidnapped women and girls had returned. It was obvious that they had been carried away in the night by the gendarmes who were entrusted with the protection of the caravan.



Later it came to light that these gendarmes had been specially trained for just such a task, namely, to lead the caravans. There were men among them who had been released from jails. A whole legion of criminals had been called to task so that there would be no feeling of scruple in the execution of the crimes. During the course of our entire journey when such terrible scenes were unfolded that would move the stones, these gendarmes viewed the thing with complete indifference, or with a cynical smile. Bayonetting an exhausted straggler at the rear of the caravan seemed like child's play to them.

The following days of our journey to exile were extremely painful. Many collapsed from sheer exhaustion. Oldsters, in their death throes, dragged themselves to the wayside, waiting for death to put an end to their suffering. Mothers with minors made superhuman efforts to keep pace with the caravan.

My Grandmother, despite her robust looks, could not keep pace with us. Her feet were swollen, dragging the march, while the whips of the gendarmes kept crackling on the backs of those who lagged behind.

Our caravan consisted of that class of the population of Adapazar who had never traveled half an hour in all their lives. The Armenian populace of our city generally were well off, never having experienced any hardship. And now, the physical torture was aggravated by the spiritual suffering, shattering the will of all. There was not a moment when the name of some relative or acquaintance who had just died did not make the rounds in the caravan via the whispering grapevine.

When emerging from Adapazar, our caravan had the appearance of a wedding procession, everyone being immaculately dressed. The men generally were dressed in black, the women in their

golden ornaments, high heels, and silken bonnets. After a few days of the trekking, however, this pleasing view was completely transformed making an observer from the distance think it was a procession of beggars passing by.

Strangely enough, the minors better stood the painful journey. After the separation of my father little Shakeh kept up the march without grumbling. I held her hand firmly while she still clung to her doll. As if I was the guardian of the family I constantly cheered on my Grandmother, trying to lift one of the bundles she carried on her back.

We had a distant relative by the name of Vartouhie, a wise and hardy woman who, together with a few other women, rushed to the aid of the helpless. It was through their efforts that collections, in the form of food and bribe, were taken up in the caravan to buy the gendarmerie in return for a brief respite on the banks of some stream, to partake of a small repast, and to be refreshed for resuming the journey.

It was with great difficulty that, towards evening, we arrived at the Village of Kara-keoy. We contemplated each stop on our journey with a certain dread as we watched from a distance the inhabitants of the village assembled like voracious birds, waiting for our arrival. Fortunately, at this particular stop, the gendarmes were firm and did not permit the villagers to approach us. This friendly gesture once again engendered a wave of optimism among the women. The mothers of the families had forgotten to mourn for their lost ones and buried their dead without weeping, the supreme concern of all being how to save their children. The girls and the young brides were assembled at a center while the rest surrounded them. At that time they still hoped to save a fragment from this helpless multitude by appeasing the executioners. Later events

proved that this was much like trying to save a defenseless flock of the sheep from a pack of wolves.

Late in the night my Grandmother awakened me. She was very thirsty, and she begged me to bring her some water. Others before me had been with her, and it was plain that she was sick, her feet swollen and bleeding. An old woman brought some water from a nearby stream and they placed my Grandmother's feet in the cold water. My poor Grandmother kept moaning and begging those who stood by, in case she died, not to abandon her grandchildren. They all tried to comfort her.

Early in the morning, through an incomprehensible act of friendliness, the gendarmes permitted the women of the caravan to hire burrows from the Turkish villagers for as far as the next stop. We profited from this amenity to transport my Grandmother, otherwise we would have been forced to leave her behind. The peasant who transported us was a kind old man who took pity on my little sister, and from time to time, made her ride on the back of the burrow behind my Grandmother.

We learned that our next stop would be Esgishehir and that the gendarmes had been ordered, when near the city, to be a little more friendly to the exiles.

Despite this unexpected accommodation the condition of my Grandmother steadily grew worse, and while she did her utmost to put up a bold front, it nevertheless was plain to us that she could scarcely hold herself erect on her pack animal. Those around her shook their heads in great concern as they pointed to me and my little sister, as if to say, "What's going to happen to those poor babies?"

Toward evening we could see the City of Esgishehir looming before us and instantly there were exclamations of joy all

around in the hope of obtaining some favorable mediations since many in the caravan had relatives in Esgishehir, or, perhaps, the authorities might think we had had enough and they might permit us to remain here as our final stop.

These optimistic expectations, however, did not last long, because, soon after, mounted gendarmes circled in the caravan, ordering us to bypass Esgishehir and proceed on to the mountains of Keotahia.

### I Lose My Grandmother

We camped that night on the scraggy slopes of a mountain, one hour's march from Esgishehir. I shall never forget the last days of my Grandmother in her death throes. Tired and exhausted, the caravan was strewn on the ground, each one having his own patient, or someone who had to be buried, no one had time to pay any attention to us. My little sister and I were cuddled against the side of my Grandmother, waiting with palpitating hearts for her to speak, and yet we could see her lips refused to part and her body began to chill. We two waifs snuggled closer, crying, and trying to warm her body with the heat of our little bodies. Through our child's instinct we felt that we would now be left entirely homeless, parentless and helpless in this world. During the course of three days we had witnessed many deaths, and we had seen how men die from sheer exhaustion and suffering. In a very short time death had become a familiar thing to us, still, we were not yet reconciled with the idea of losing our Grandmother. In her we had seen our only protector and guardian. Besides, she was the one who had taken care of us from early childhood and we were attached to her more than to our father.

The next morning my Grandmother was past standing on her feet, and since there

were others on the brink of death, the gendarmes, after a brief consultation among themselves, decided to leave them behind in the mountains since it was all the same to them, whether right there and then, or an hour later, death would come to execute its inexorable mission. Many tried to persuade the gendarmes to permit them to stay behind to take care of these unfortunates but the latter were adamant. He who had still strength enough left in him had to keep pace with the caravan.

In the course of these conversations, by a strange autosuggestion, I took the hand of my little sister Shakeh, and the two of us secretly slipped behind a rock, hid ourselves in the thickets and with beating hearts waited for the caravan to set out. When we saw that everyone was gone we at once ran to our Grandmother. At sight of us she seemed to have regained a straggling vitality, she pressed us to herself and squeezed the last tear drops to drench our cheeks.

A little later we noticed that there were other children and women hidden behind, to attend to their sick loved ones. We at once fetched water from a neighboring creek, gathered branches of dry wood, and built a fire, to serve some sort of hot potion to the sick. Each one brought forth her supply of food to see how many days we could live in those deserted mountains. We seemed to have rid ourselves forever of the vigilance of the gendarmes. A few of the elderly women set out in all directions in search of some safe caves, and, really, did discover a spacious cavern near the top of the mountain. The transporting of the sick to the cave proved to be quite an arduous task. We made a sort of stretchers from short rugs, lay the sick on them, and holding the edges, we moved them to our new hideout.

That night we built a fire of dried wood

and brush. The sick opened their eyes a little, our Grandmother already had started to murmur some words, tried to smile in her effort to cheer us, and, clasping her hands, she prayed constantly.

In the succeeding days we were very careful in the daytime for fear we might betray our presence to the shepherds and, thus, to jeopardize our lives. We kids, especially, learned to be highly ingenious. When we climbed down to the creek to fetch water, or when we gathered wild vegetables through the trails between the rocks, one of us always stood guard to warn the others when danger loomed, in time to hide ourselves underneath the bushes.

We kept this up for more than twenty days, many of the sick already were dead, the condition of my grandmother deteriorated day by day, and while she could speak with a little more ease, still she was utterly helpless to move. We failed to notice her steady worsening, noting only her newly-acquired ability to speak. She talked constantly like a baby just breaking, lavishing upon us each moment her customary affectionate words and trying to make us believe that soon we would return to our birthplace.

It was a cold night, our fire had just begun to settle when we heard the sound of footsteps. We all held our breath, waiting tensely for the approach of the feet. Suddenly we heard some Armenian words, someone was asking the site of the sick from Adapazar. The voice was familiar to us, and my Grandmother suddenly straightened herself, supporting herself on her two hands. "This is the voice of my son," she said, and cried out with all her might. We all sprang to our feet, and, in the light of the fire, at the entrance of the cave we saw three shadows, one of whom was my father. We ran and threw ourselves in his arms.

When we quieted down my father told us that the men who had been separated from the caravan, after a few hours of labor, had been set out for Der-ez-Zor, while they had managed to escape and reach Esgishehir where they learned that our caravan was headed for the mountains of Afion Karahissar. They had had great difficulty in catching up with the caravan, had made their way near to the caravan by night without being noticed by the gendarmes and had learned that we had been left here dying. They had resumed the search, and finally they had found us here.

I shall never forget the image of my father that night. He had wasted greatly, his eyes were sunk deep in their sockets, and his face was more pale. His beard had grown and his hair, which once was jet black, was now graying. Only his voice had retained its authenticity.

My Grandmother gave glory to God for this miracle, her greatest happiness being that she was able to deliver us, sound and safe, into the hands of my father. "My son," she said, "here are the trusts which you committed to my care. I am doomed to die. Try to save them."

My father's words and importunities were to no avail. Our Grandmother wasted away by the hour. She no longer felt the urge to keep on living. Now she could die in peace since her little chicks had found their guardian. Suddenly, and for the last time, she recovered her consciousness, pointed to her breast, and made my father understand to draw out the hidden treasure — the gold pieces which she had hidden there. The little bundle contained two ornaments which encased the holy relics of Saint Gayane and St. Rhipsime. My Grandmother had great difficulty in making my father understand this. She wanted them to be hidden inside mine and my little sister's clothes, something which my father immediately carried out.

Toward morning my Grandmother passed away in the arms of her son.

Fallen on her lifeless body, my father wept long while we youngsters, outside the cave, were busy digging a grave with blades of tin. For the past few days the feeling had been advanced among us that this was a necessary labor which devolved upon us. The prompt burial of the dead could diminish the grief of our loved ones. Besides, we had noticed that the burial of a dead generated a sort of comfort to the survivors. In those days, it seemed, the worry over the possibility of being left unburied constituted the chief pain to the parents, and for this reason, they all in their prayers begged God for a grave when they were dead.

At the last moment, when we settled the body of our Grandmother in her grave, my little sister Shakeh felt for the first time what was happening, and with a burst, she threw herself upon the grave, while I, unable to control myself, fell beside her. My father picked us both up, took us in his arms and carried us into the cave.

Talking to us as to grown persons, my father that day made us understand how the Turks were trying to destroy our people and what all we should do in order to stay alive. All of this was difficult for us to understand and the only thing which stuck with us was that he would move us to Esgishehir that very night and place us under the protection of certain acquaintances.

The next day we waited until the sun was set. For the last time we knelt before my Grandmother's grave. My father had planted a cross woven of green leaves at the head of the grave. We surrounded it, offered our prayers, and set out on our journey.

### I Lose My Father

After we had advanced a considerable

distance we noticed the lights of Esgishehir. We had to exercise great care not to fall down the precipices. My Father carried Shakeh in his arms while I scampered ahead, trying to show the safe trails. Each whisper heard in the darkness forced us to seek safety behind trees and the bushes.

Finally, after midnight, we succeeded in arriving at Esgishehir. We hid ourselves among the trees near the city and waited for the morning. However, all the precautions of my father proved vain, because, at daybreak as we were making our way through the streets clandestinely, we suddenly came face to face with a company of gendarmes who arrested us and took us to a nearby KHAN, a sort of oriental lodging place. We soon learned that many Armenians like us who had escaped their caravans had been arrested and brought here.

We were held in this Khan for fifteen days. The number of such escapees steadily mounted, and, due to the intolerably unsanitary conditions, the epidemic spread among us. More than 500 were crowded in a place which could scarcely hold one hundred. Each person received a daily ration of one black loaf of bread. A traffic in foodstuffs with the outside through the guards sold at black market prices. In a situation like this, many envied the lot of their compatriots who had been exiled to the deserts. We had one casualty each day. This was the situation when, one evening, the guards warned us to be ready to set out in the morning.

And, as a matter of fact, they mobilized us before daybreak. We were glad that my father was with us. Holding firmly by his hands, we were confident that no one could separate us from him.

The gendarmes who escorted this caravan were a little more friendly to us than the formers. According to them we were to be led to Aleppo where we would re-

main until the end of the war. Later it developed that this plan had for its aim to lead us to Der-ez-Zor, the general slaughter house of the Armenians.

The fear of us all was that they again would separate the men from us but this, too, never happened. Even at the end of our second stop they were so lenient as to permit us to hire transportation means, however, many could not avail of this opportunity since they had been robbed of all their possessions, so that, as far as the town of Chay Station near Konia, we had on our hands many dead and many stragglers who were left behind.

My father took turns in carrying me and my sister Shakeh on his back part of the way, and the rest of the time, catching up with the stage carriages hired from station to station, he would settle us in one of them. Many hoped to make their escape on the way, to seek shelter in Konia and, after Bonzanti, in Adana, but each time our caravan passed by these cities the gendarmes increased their vigilance, and in this manner, we carried on for more than twenty days. Our faces were covered with the grime and the dust, our clothes were tattered and we had the general appearance of perfect beggars. My father was wasting away from day to day, we could see that his feet were swollen and he marched with difficulty. In a few days his hair had turned completely white, his eyes were sunk, and he was completely unrecognizable. Seeing his plight I tried to be brave, never complained, and refused to be carried in his arms. In times of extreme exhaustion I satisfied myself by holding his hand. For a staff to lean against, I secured a stick of my height and, not to let him sense my inner suffering, I tried always to keep a cheerful smile. I even explained these proceedings of mine to my little sister Shakeh who listened to me without understanding a thing, and, for-



getting herself for the moment, she kept the pace with me.

In this condition we arrived at the Village of Islahieh which, at the time, was a principal concentration camp for the refugees. Here my father managed to bribe one of the guards and, separating from the caravan, took us to the village. Fortune smiled on us for a few days in Islahieh. A Kurdish family had consented to rent a small hut to my father, which, after the fatigue and the suffering of the journey, seemed like a veritable palace to us. We even were able to secure some mattresses on which to rest our bodies for the first time in two months.

In following days we even began to think of our washing, and I, having assumed the airs of a full grown matron, sat before a tub of tin while my father heated the water and little Shakeh tried to spread the washed rags on boulders.

In this manner we had barely rested our tortured bodies and were planning to find a way of reaching Aleppo when, suddenly, my father fell ill seriously. For a whole month we exhausted all means to bring my father back to health. There were other refugees in the village and each morning I knocked at the doors to obtain a little milk for my father. There were kind-hearted women who often called on us and prepared various kinds of herbs for my father, still he continued to waste away from day to day and no remedy could be found for his pains. To further aggravate our plight, the news one day was spread in the village that all the refugees in the village would be deported to Der-ez-Zor.

The next day the mayor of the village made the rounds of the homes and had the names of all the refugees registered. My father begged them to spare him, and give him a little more time until he regained his strength. After a little thought the village mayor promised to save us for good

provided my father allowed him to adopt his eldest daughter, a proposition whose sinister implication did not miss my father and which he peremptorily rejected, saying: "It's better that you behead my daughters on my knees rather than to take them away from me as long as I am alive." Upon this unexpected answer the man angrily ordered my father to be ready in the morning for the long march.

The owner of our hut, a kind-hearted old man, took pity on us, and in response to our importunities, he rented us one of his camels for the transportation of my father.

It is with a sense of terror that I now recall the details of that last journey with my father. He was so far gone that he could not sit erect on the camel. Almost half dead, lying on the back of the camel, he tried to follow us with his extinguished eyes, while I, holding my sister by the hand, tried to keep pace with the animal. Whenever the latter was too fast for us we shouted to my father, assuring him that we were not far behind.

Thus, after a few hours of running and panting, our little knees began to give in. Shakeh was six at the time, she cried all the time, she wanted father and could not walk any farther. Our escorting gendarmes were exceedingly savage, they incessantly whipped the stragglers and bayonnetted on the spot those who could not move. No one was interested in us now. Every one had his own worries. Some women had suckling babies, others were pregnant, some wanted to bury their loved ones but, under the whip of the gendarmes, were forced to leave them behind and hurry to rejoin the caravan.

When we arrived at Katma everyone in the caravan stretched on the ground. Water, water, they were all crying. Many of them were wounded. If anyone tried to move and bring water from the nearby

creek he was shot on the spot. We dismounted my father from the camel, almost dead, while the gendarmes ordered the camel driver to return to his village. Falling on our dying father, my little sister and I kept crying. Suddenly we noticed villagers were swarming upon from all sides who started to pillage the caravan right before the eyes of the gendarmes who were supposed to protect us. They separated many women from their children and carried them away.

They found nothing of any value with us but a Turkish urchin was cruel enough to rob my little sister of her only possession — her cherished doll which, despite her fatigue and her sufferings, the poor darling had pressed to her heart all during the journey. To her, the little doll was a living being which should never be surrendered to the beasts. She let out such a piercing cry that even my father in his dying condition was aroused and rolled his eyes helplessly in a last minute effort to squeeze out a parting tear drop.

When the lootings and the kidnappings came to an end the gendarmes resumed the crackle of their whips. We could not move my father from his place and all advised us to abandon him since his death was a matter of minutes, still we would not part from him. Fallen on his almost lifeless body we kept crying, pressing our faces to his, and appealing to him with our heart-rending cries not to abandon us, not to leave us to the wolves.

Presently we felt the sharp crackle of the gendarmes' whip on our backs. They dragged us away from there and forced us into the caravan. Holding each other's hand, my little sister and I kept running and looking behind until the body of our father completely vanished from view. Thus, we kept running with bleeding feet until evening, we wept and cried out loud our father's name against the endless sand

of the desert and against indifferent skies.

When, thus, we were completely alone, a strange power of the will seemed to take possession of both my little sister and myself. A divine voice seemed to call on me not to despair, and to continue the arduous journey in order to preserve the name of our family, the name of my unfortunate father. In the course of a few brief months the suffering had doubled our age, making us think like matured women. Putting our heads together, my little sister and I, before arriving at each station, planned the precise means which we would employ to secure a morsel of bread. If the caravan stopped for a few days at a given station, we would immediately set to work, first gathering fuel wood to be exchanged for bread, or carrying water for those who were in need of aid. There still were quite a number of families in the caravan who were comparatively better off than we were and who had managed to conceal some coins in the folds of their tattered rags. Others had managed to still cling to their clothes which they now sold for money. What mattered was that we obtain some dry bread with which to prolong our lives.

After we lost our father, our greatest terror of the first day was the fear of being left behind. How was little Shakeh to keep pace with the march? And yet, great was my surprise when I saw her keep up the march for fully eight hours without a murmur. Our bare feet were by now used to the pains caused by rocks and thorns. If on the way we encountered any shreds of clothing we carefully picked them up to be used as improvised soft moccasins. Sometimes we stripped the dead of their clothing to be sold in exchange for bread. This was a risky business since the gendarmes, if they saw us, would shoot us on the spot. The clothes of the dead should by right belong to the Turks, this was the accepted law everywhere, and, as a matter of fact,

there was no need of a law since all the refugees already were stripped clean.

In the initial stages, when we came across dead bodies, completely naked, strewn on the wayside, we closed our eyes in order to spare ourselves the horrible images, but gradually such sights became commonplace, and we, having by now outgrown our initial revulsion, actually sought out such last fragments which served to cover the nakedness of the dead.

Even today I shudder as I recall how once, my little sister and I hurriedly stripped the dead body of a little girl of our age, and when we were through, we were horrified as the little girl opened her eyes, cried to her mother three times, then closed her eyes forever.

In those days the feelings of men were dulled and their hearts, now petrified, were converted into insensible vessels. No image of misery was strong enough to shock us. All the deeds of our executioners seemed normal procedure to our insensitized eyes, and a sort of familiarity had grown up between death and ourselves. When persons buried a loved one they took a deep breath, as if having been rid of a heavy burden. It is impossible, not only to relate, but even to imagine all that took place on the roads which we passed. And for this reason, it is impossible to describe the spiritual state of the people who were subjected to these sufferings.

### I Lose My Sister

When that day I lost my little sister Shakeh my last prop of comfort, no one responded to my piteous cries except an old woman who, turning to me indifferently, informed me that the gypsies had carried her away.

This happened in front of a town called Bob near Aleppo. We had just arrived there when, to eke out something to eat, I had ordered my little sister to wait for me

until I had time to sell the few shreds of clothing which we had picked up on the road. Fortune had smiled upon me that day and in a short while I was on my way back to the camp loaded with two huge loaves of bread. I wanted as soon as possible to reach and to gladden the little darling. But I was horrified when I verified that Shakeh was not there, and although I was told that she had been kidnapped by the gypsies, I cried in a loud voice and calling her by the name I made the rounds of all the refugees in the camp only to be disappointed. There was no one to answer my cries; Shakeh was lost to me forever. A deep, infinite sense of weariness overpowered me at that moment. Until that moment it was the consciousness of my duty as an elder sister which kept me going through the sufferings. I was tired, exhausted, already an old woman of eight years with my sufferings, my durability, and by the maturity forced upon me by an inexorable life. I had lost my sister, my last refuge, the legacy left to me by my father. I could no longer see any reason to keep on living, no sense in dragging my bleeding feet in the sand of those endless deserts. Would it not be far better to die and be spared this unexampled suffering?

Steeped in these thoughts, plunged into deep despair I felt, that my feet would no longer obey my nerve impulses, and I could scarcely hold my head erect on my shoulders. A few more steps, and presently, my eyes clouded and I fell senseless on a pile of dead bodies. It seemed to me I was now in my dying moments. I had not lost my consciousness, still a strange sense of peace had descended upon my soul. The thought that I would die in a few hours brought to me an unusual happiness. All the dead around me seemed alive now, and it seemed, together with them, I was waiting for the opening of the heavenly gate when, in a matter of moments, the angels would

appear to lead us to our final resting place. I could now freely see the faces of my Grandmother and my father, and, of course, my little sister Shakeh would soon join us.

These meditations gradually were transformed into delirium, my consciousness left me, a dull sense of numbness permeated my nerves, my eyes were completely closed, and the image of Death, with a long hoary beard, approached me with infinite tenderness.

After that, all that I can recall today, is that wandering strippers of the dead came across me, and one of them, in stripping me of my last rags, discovered the relic of Saint Gayane which had been sewn on the inside lining of my shirt, was shaken by the touch of the miraculous relic, and as if by a miracle my eyes were opened, and the robber of the dead, shocked by the miracle, embraced me, and without the knowledge of his confederates took me into his tent.

#### In the Tent of a Gypsy

When I recovered my senses I saw two grown Armenian girls seated above my head. They told me that the man who had brought me there was also their kidnapper. I wept the story of my sufferings and losses to them, ever since we had set out from Adapazar and they tried to comfort me, expressing the hope that I would find my sister some day.

After a few days of care and treatment my health returned to me. The Gypsy who had kidnapped me had seven children from his first wife whose greatest pleasure was to beat, torture and insult me. Fortunately, his mother left me in charge of pasturing the family cows, an assignment which kept me away from the house most of the day.

Thus, clothed in rags, nourished on a ration of dry bread, for fully eight months I did the chores of a grown woman inside

the home and the remainder of the time I spent outside pasturing the animals. Against the persecution of his children the Gypsy generally took my side, threatening to move me to Aleppo unless they changed their attitude toward me.

In moments when I was left alone I would kneel down and pray, pouring out the whole importunity of my childish soul unto God. I pleaded with Him to save me of my suffering and to return my little sister to me.

And one day when the Gypsy was away, the neighboring gypsy women tied my hands and feet and with large needles started to tattoo my face. I screamed from the pain and the terror of the new experience while the children of the house beat my body with blows of sticks in order to silence me. In the midst of this ordeal my kidnapper returned home, and seeing what they were doing to me, announced that the very next day he would take me to Aleppo to sell me to a rich family.

#### My Arab Benefactor

And, truly, the next day he took me to Aleppo. On the way he told me he would place me with a rich family where I would be safe and comfortable in every way.

Hamid Bey, my new master from Aleppo, was a scion of a noble Arab family. For fully three years, namely, until the Armistice of 1918, this family took care of me with the tenderness and the affection of my own parents. If the children of the family annoyed me they would promptly be punished by their mother. I was forbidden to do heavy work inside the home. On the other hand, I wanted to show my gratitude for the affection which they showed me. There were two Armenian woman servants in the house who likewise showed great tenderness toward me. Thus, gradually, the memory of my sufferings left me and the image of my parents grew

dimmer in my mind. The only one I remembered distinctly was my little sister whom I remembered in my prayers each night before retiring.

For three years I did not step out once from the Hamid mansion, and since all inside the home spoke Arabic, I began to forget my mother tongue of Armenian. The two Armenian servants did the same thing, they were always careful not to step out lest they be seen. Cooped up inside these walls, for years we knew nothing of the goings on in the outside world. We were convinced there was no Armenian left anymore and we were doomed to our captivity to the end.

One day one of the women who worked with us having learned that the war was over and the Armenians assembled in their church, she took heart and visited the church. Seeing the reports she had heard were true she rushed home and told us all about it. There were thousands of Armenians in Aleppo, and that our compatriots were assembling from all parts to return to their former homes.

Our two Armenian servants decided to see Hamid Bey in regard to this new development and to sound him as to his dispositions on the matter of our freedom. Hamid Bey told them that he had no objection if they wanted to leave, but he was very much concerned about the stability of the present situation, and he suggested that we wait a little while longer. As to my case, he made it clear that he could not let a little girl of this age outside of his home, until he had reliable word that she would be able to discover her relatives.

One Sunday morning one of the Armenian women upon her return from church told us that at the door of the Armenian Prelacy there is posted a long list of the names of those missing persons who are being sought by their relatives.

The same day she checked that my name also was included in the missing list. There were those in Istanbul who were looking for me.

This particular bit of news left no impression upon me whatsoever. The memory of my parents had long since grown dim while I didn't even have the slightest idea about my relatives. At that time the only thing which constricted my heart was the thought of my lost sister. The family of Hamid Bey had been so affectionate to me that it never occurred to me to leave them. Who, on the other hand, could be looking for me? My Grandmother had died before my eyes, we had abandoned my father half-dying, who else was there left in this world who now could comfort me?

This mood, however, could not be consistently sustained. At certain moments of the day a sort of sadness filled me. An urge to cry constricted my throat. A forgotten past slowly loomed before my eyes. The image of a house, a street, an orchard, a school began to assume clear lines on the horizon. But the moment did not last long when I heard the voice of Hamid Bey's wife, calling "Mariam," ever so tenderly. Then I would forget every thing, as if wishing to deny the memories of my childhood, as if wishing to refuse to go even to my own mother, if, by some miracle, she suddenly should appear.

My failure to respond to what generally would be accepted as natural seemed strange to the women who worked at our home. They knew that I had been separated from my parents at a very tender age and that the years, in their normal course, would stamp their seal of orphanhood upon my adolescent age. Their efforts to take me to the Armenian Prelacy without the knowledge of my foster parents proved vain. The lack of confidence and the fear, combined with the guilt consciousness of doing something clandestine



against my Mistress, would not permit me to take a single step outside the house.

And yet, fate could not be made to depart from its normal course. My childish prayers could not be for nothing. I had many days to live yet, loved ones whom inevitably I should meet. Life, with its stormy ups and downs, was calling me. Life, with its disappointments and its vanities would yet reembrace me. Life with its deep-running currents, its heroic struggles, had many things to tell me yet in the fields of benevolence and usefulness to mankind. I had to come out of the fortified walls of Hamid Bey's mansion.

### I Return to My People

One Sunday afternoon a priest and two official representatives from the Armenian Prelacy of Aleppo called at the mansion of Hamid Bey. The Armenian servants of the house immediately let me know that they had come to take me away. I do not know why, but suddenly I had a crying spell. It was in this condition that they called me to the reception room. Holding me by the hand, Hamid Bey delivered me to the Armenian priest. Through the hall window and behind the curtains I could feel that all eyes of the inmates of the house were fixed upon me. Again my throat was constricted and I cried sobbingly. At this moment the youth who accompanied the priest took out a letter from his pocket and told me that my aunt in Istanbul was looking for me.

My parting from the home of Hamid Bey was difficult. For fully four years they had taken care of me. I was as one of their own children. True, they, too, were Moslems, yet how different from the Turks! They belonged to the noble Arab race to whom the Armenian people would be grateful now and in future years.

By arrangement of the Armenian Prelacy I remained at the Orphanage for a few

days, until they notified by wire my aunt that I had been found. The reply was prompt. My aunt sent money with instruction that I should be sent to Adapazar, my birth place, at the very first instance. My preparations for the journey took two months. A whole caravan, including me, had to leave for Istanbul first. I could not be allowed to travel alone. The intervening two months were exceedingly pleasant and useful to me through my association with fellow orphans of my age. An entirely new world was opened before my eyes, a miracle world. They taught us singing. My mother tongue of the Armenian, of which scarcely a few fragmentary memories were left, fast returned to me and I was soon recognized as quite an attentive pupil.

This orphanage has also stamped in my memory a long list of sad images. This was the place where all the Armenian women and girls recovered from Kurdish and Arabic Ashirets in the vicinity of Aleppo were assembled. These included all sort of hapless souls of all ages. Most of them had forgotten their mother tongue nor did they remember the names of their parents. There were very young brides with babies in their arms. On occasion a Kurd or an Arab would call to claim his child. It was impossible to separate such mothers from their children. There were others who wanted willingly to return to their executioners. The faces of many of them were tatooed like mine. There seemed to be an air of indifference, a sort of fatalism on many of their faces.

Finally one evening they served us notice to be ready to set out in the morning. Our journey lasted eight days. I had been entrusted to the care of fellow-townsmen from Adapazar who hovered over me like guardian angels until I was delivered to my aunt.

It is impossible to describe the emotions which overwhelmed my aunt after she

found me in her arms. I was the only one left of all her loved ones and she wanted to expend the full weight of her nostalgia upon me.

It is difficult to describe, yes, and yet what need is there of describing the miraculous meeting of surviving loved ones after the years of those terrible deportations since every Armenian has experienced that suffering, every Armenian has heard of the tragedy of some loved one, and legion is the number of those who event-

ually pressed to their bosom their pitiful waifs who had escaped from the tents of gypsies, now dissimilated, having completely lost their mother tongue, but who yet preserved their native Armenian aptitudes. How many of those slaves of the shepherds of yesteryear who today have grown to manhood and have filled their proper stations in life through their diligence and the force of their character!

I was one of those little Armenian girls with rosy cheeks who had carved on her forehead the entire tragedy of her race.

*(To be continued)*

## CITATIONS FROM MY FIRST CONGENITAL RAVE

Dedicated to James G. Mandalian

"A TRAGIC COMEDY"

*I asked my papa  
At a Sunday Mass  
Some two decades ago  
When I was yet a scrupulous shoot  
Virtuous and gregarious  
And wore chaste, ironed shirts  
And chaste, polished shoes  
Looking like a French poodle outside  
And a Michelangelo cherub inside  
With my cheeks iridescently gorgeous  
And my mind pliant and irrational  
With a heart philanthropic  
That why our mahogany pews  
Were not upholstered*

*Is it because we are poor, papa?  
I asked  
What he said  
The Armenian people, I mean, papa  
No, my son, he said  
Evasively and dignified  
God's belongings have  
To be of the poor quality  
They have to be symphonious and  
symmetrical  
With His Cross and His Wishes.  
And look here, son  
He went on augustly and enthusiastically  
With a crack in his voice  
The Armenians are never poor  
They are the richest people on this earth...*

*And on the other tool  
What other, papa?  
God's earth he exclaimed*

*Front of us  
Sheared-to-the-bone texture  
Conferred on  
Half standing  
Fluttering  
Half sitting  
Blubbering  
Half kneeling  
Flopping  
(Inveighing?)  
Where people of the most  
Miserably tensile, devoid quality  
(Prolixity?)  
Of the most heartbreakng, yet tensibly  
symphonious  
And of the most hectic symmetrical quality  
(Tautology?)  
With God's indigent Cross  
The pauperized Cross  
Harnessed tandem  
And with God's dire Wishes  
Teemed to the sternum*

*Looking at them I exclaimed to myself  
These people must be awfully religious!  
They must be God's belongings  
They can't be poor*

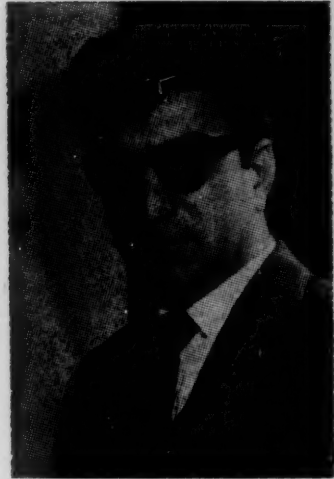
When they are Armenians!  
Can they papa, can they?  
I turned to my father

But my papa  
Had then sunk into his world  
Into his only world  
Into Armenians' only world  
The Armenians' purgatory world  
The Armenians' tangible purgatory world  
The Armenians' terrestrial tangible  
purgatory world  
Only the Armenians can make belief  
What purgatory is  
And if there is such a world.  
The Armenians  
The purgatory  
The Christianity  
The world of sitting at the same  
Table with Christ  
And sharing His bread and wine  
The world of perennial beauty and chastity  
The world of perennial torture and misery!  
My papa was then silent  
Silent in his consolation  
And there was a little smile  
On his lips  
Against the deformed, livid face by  
enigmatic anguish  
Emitting colourful sufferings  
I myself was then too young  
To conquer over the Armenians' fate  
Like my father  
Like those devoid Armenians  
In front of me  
Half standing  
(Titillating?)  
Half sitting  
Half kneeling  
(Still eligible as living objects —  
I wouldn't object!)

Half alive  
(Tingling?)  
Half dead  
(Obituary about the one million defunct!  
All under one name?)

Under what heading?  
On a pageless page  
In a paperless paper  
In a worldless world  
Among the inhumanely human!)  
I learned the story  
About the Armenians  
Before I could spell my name  
My name after my grandfather  
A real Christian name  
The name of a real saint  
Who really believed in God  
Before anybody knew anything about God  
And before anybody knew anything  
My grandpapa was hauled  
The taproots first!  
Over a gibbet  
(Shouldn't I rehash and rejuvenate  
Or reincarnate or exhume?)  
And before anybody knew anything  
(Grandpa wagging you recline!  
What elegy could I devise to solace  
And embed your heroic spirit?)  
About my grandpapa's gibbet  
The twigs took turns over the gibbet  
Incumbent on everybody!  
And soon there was no gibbet left  
For the rest of the impaneled  
One million gibbets  
Not a nation could afford  
One million Armenians  
How could I refrain?!  
Not a nation's trenchant — even  
Machetes, adzes and sickles  
Wouldn't droop and pant  
From overwork and friction  
Against the bones —  
The Armenians' bones  
Like fowls at Christmastime  
Wantonness in holy days  
Only the desert and the sun  
Wouldn't flag and limp  
From such an over task  
The desert  
The sun  
Would engulf anything

Must be Devil's creations  
 And the devil must be  
 On the Turks' side  
 A brute  
 And the Devil, greatest of all felons  
 And the Turks, not less ferocious  
 And flagrant defyers  
 And the desert and the sun  
 In allied power  
 Like a packed sordid panel  
 Cloaked under the  
 World War  
 The First Carnage  
 Wiped the rest of the one million  
 Of the Armenians...  
 And some like my mother  
 A waif  
 A sprig  
 Whose opalescent bizarre wails  
 Were audible  
 Which enchanted the groping, roving  
 Insidious, tarnished Bedouins  
 Were snatched from  
 The parched claws of the desert  
 (Hymns to them!  
 Saved my mother  
 Saved many mothers!)  
 To be used as manure  
 To breed the barren race  
 And their faces were tattooed  
 And they were baptized as  
 Their own incrustated offsprings  
 And after a decade an aeon  
 It had the chance to cauterize  
 And efface their tenacious stigmas...  
 The church and the congregators  
 Turned into a battlefield and armed forces  
 The crozier, a lance  
 The miter, a helmet  
 And the priest himself  
 In his black cope  
 Looked to me  
 The Devil himself  
 And I was but a child  
 To stand up and fight and defend myself  
 Like my father's six brothers



YEGHIA NAKASHIAN

Yeghia Nakashian, who has written in the *Armenian Review* as Yeghia-Baghdad, is a resident of Baghdad, Iraq, where he received his education, and where he is employed at the local English-language newspaper. His verses stamp him as one of the more promising young writers among Armenians today. He is the find of the year—a young man whose command of the English-language is phenomenal for one not born and brought up in an English-speaking atmosphere.

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Like my father's twin sisters  
 Like all the Armenians' brothers  
 And twin sisters —  
 And ran away

I noticed I was out in the churchyard  
 I saw some children playing hide-and-seek  
 Whom are you hiding from  
 The Turks? I asked one of the children  
 He didn't understand me  
 And thought I was asking  
 The pursuer's name  
 "Garò" he said  
 You mean "Garabet" I questioned  
 Yes he said  
 "Garabet" is an Armenian name  
 I said, with my legs quivering  
 Why are you hiding from an Armenian?  
 Are they this time



*Disguised under  
Armenian names?  
You coward brutes!  
I got to inform my father!  
They took away my grandfather  
With an invitation card  
This time they will be  
After my father  
With another trick!*

*And hurled back  
And stood abreast with my  
Leonine, vulnerable father  
To confront if there  
Should be another attack!*

*"In every tragedy, there is a comedy;  
and in every comedy there are two kinds  
of tears."*

# A HISTORY OF ARMENIA

HRAND PASDERMADJIAN

## CHAPTER IX

### THE KINGDOM OF NEW ARMENIA

#### The Arrival of Prince Rouben In the Mountains of Cilicia

Truly, it was a daring idea to attempt to create a new kingdom on the shores of the Mediterranean to replace the one which had disappeared under the joint Byzantine and Turanian blows on the banks of the Araxes.

Of course history is full of examples of such creations as the extension or the reproduction of the fatherland over a distance of hundreds, or even thousands of miles. This, particularly, was the case with New England, the cradle of the United States, and New France in Canada.

But the epic of New Armenia is unique in that, unlike the others, it did not rely on the aid of a powerful fatherland or other such means. When the real Armenia fell under foreign domination the Armenians had nothing but their own private strength to rely upon.

The only parallel of this period of Armenian history is found in the history of the Russian people during the Thirteenth and Fourteenth centuries when the Kingdom of Kiev was destroyed by the blows of Turanian tribes and there came into existence the Muscovite Russia on the other extremity of Europe's eastern plain.

When the nomadic hordes of Central Asia flooded Armenia, the Armenians ral-

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*In the list of other merits displayed by the Armenian nation toward the Church and the Christian Republic there is one which stands out, and which is worthy of special mention. When, once upon a time, Christian princes and their armies went forth to liberate the Holy Land, not one nation or people hastened to their aid with such promptitude and zeal as the Armenians, be it with their warriors and horses, or their supplies and counsel. With all their power, and with supreme valor and loyalty they helped the Christians in these Holy Wars.*

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POPE GREGORY XIII  
(*Ecclesia Romana*, 1584)

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lied to the banners of a great prince, and, arms in hand, and through a vicious struggle, carved for themselves a new fatherland which prolonged the independence of Armenia for three centuries.

When we consider the fact that, after the loss of the independence of Major Armenia, the Armenia of the Bagratids, toward the middle of the Eleventh century the number of Armenians living in Cilicia was negligible, the creation of a new state in that land within less than fifty years must be considered as a remarkable achievement which constitutes one of the most glorious pages of Armenian history — a kingdom which was destined to last until the Fourteenth century.

"Is this not an extraordinary vitality on the part of a people," writes Fridtjof Nansen, "which, after being subjected to a ruthless fate, succeeded however in creating a flourishing kingdom on a foreign soil

and kept it for wholly three centuries although surrounded by enemies on all sides?"<sup>1</sup>

From the middle of the Eleventh century a certain number of Armenians, led by their nobility, had come to settle in the region of the Taurus. It was indeed the policy of Byzantium to fill the passes and the gorges which controlled the access to Cilicia with military elements capable of defending them, for Cilicia was one of the richest provinces of the Empire and at the same time most exposed to Mohammedan attacks.<sup>2</sup> It was in this manner that the Byzantine emperors contributed to the creation of several Armenian principalities in this mountainous region, enjoying a certain autonomy and still vassals of the Empire.

But, before long, new Armenian elements arrived in the land, and these had no intention of submitting to Byzantium but were bent on maintaining their independence. These Armenians found a leader who was worthy of the magnitude of the enterprise in the person of Prince Rouben, a close relative of the former King Gaghiik II, a scion of the Bagratid Dynasty whose name dominates the greater part of the history of the Armenians during the Middle Ages.

These Armenians, too, headed for Cilicia, a limited area but whose resources made it one of the richest regions of the east, a country which General Bremond called "a little Egypt, but which possesses its Alps." At that time Cilicia nominally was a part of the Byzantine Empire but the Seljuk Turks already had started their infiltration.

Prince Rouben settled down in the mountainous region of Cilicia. The Citadel (Partzrapert), not far from the City of

Sis, became the center of this new Armenian principality.

Unlike the other Armenian princes who had settled in the vicinity, Prince Rouben did not seek the protection of Byzantium. He declared himself independent and even an open enemy of Byzantium, by which very act he gave himself a sort of supremacy over the other Armenian barons.<sup>3</sup>

This was the origin of this new Armenian state, this barony which later was to become the kingdom of New Armenia and would embrace the whole of Cilicia. Often it has been called also Lesser Armenia, in contrast with Armenia Major, namely the former Armenian kingdom, which was established on the Armenian Plateau.

For fifteen decisive years (1080-1095) Prince Rouben directed the destiny of this new principality which later was to embody all Armenian hopes. Entrenched in these mountainous retreats, the Armenians repulsed all the onslaughts of neighboring states which strove to expel them from the land.

At the time of Rouben's death the Armenians were firmly entrenched in the mountains of Taurus. These mountains were to form the nucleus of the new state, the base of military operations due to which the Armenians in future years were to conquer the whole of Cilicia.

It should be admitted, however, that both in the creation and the consolidation of this new state the Armenians were aided by the external factors, namely, the situation of the Middle East in the end of the Eleventh century, as well as the unexpected, and we might say providential, invasions of the Crusaders.

#### The Middle East at the End Of the Eleventh Century

The general situation of the Middle East

<sup>1</sup>F. Nansen, *Gjennem Armenia*, Oslo, 1927, p. 202.

<sup>2</sup>Jacques de Morgan, *Histoire du Peuple armenien*, Paris, 1919, p. 165.

<sup>3</sup>Morgan, p. 166.

at the end of the Eleventh century was highly favorable for the venture which the Armenians would attempt to undertake.

This period was marked by the disintegration of the Arab empire and the decline of Islam, or at least that Islam which was considered as an element of civilization or an active force.

This disastrous evolution was the result of many factors, but mostly the advent of the Turanians represented by the Seljuk Turks who in less than one century had become masters of the greater part of the Middle East, including Iran, Armenia, almost the whole of Asia Minor, Mesopotamia (where the Califs of Baghdad maintained only a nominal rule) and Syria. Only the coastal regions of Asia Minor remained the property of Byzantium which already had begun to show increasing signs of degeneracy.

In 1071 Jerusalem, too, fell into the hands of the Seljuk Turks. These, unlike the Arabs who had shown tolerance toward the Christians established in the Holy Land and had not opposed the Pilgrimages, began to attack the pilgrims from Europe and to profane the holy places. As known, one of the causes of the Crusades was this.

But this vast empire of the Seljuk Turks did not last even forty years. It attained the zenith of its power in the days of Melik Shah (son of Alp Aslan the conqueror of Ani) who from his seat in Iran governed this vast domain from 1072 to 1092. After his death, in 1092, the Seljuk Empire was dismembered into a number of independent principalities, such as, the Sultanates of Persia, Kerman, Aleppo, Damascus, Iconia (region of Konía), Sivaz (the governor of this one was an Armenian by descent named Damischmend), and small pockets ruled by local Atabegs (chiefs).

All these states represented independent formations which were at war with one

another, unable to present a united front or a co-ordinated force against the enemy. And when we add to this the fact that the Egypt of the Fatimite Califs was at war with the Seljuks (adherents of the Sunnite cult of Islam when Egypt, until the advent of Saladin, was fanatically Shiite) then it becomes plain how deep was the breach in the Islam wall.

Just before the appearance of the Crusaders, in 1098, the Fatimite Sultans of Egypt succeeded in expelling the Seljuk Turks from Jerusalem and it was they who, the next year, defended the city against the Crusaders.

The Armenians profitted from this situation, as well as the Crusaders, and the epic of the New Armenia probably would never have been realized without the disintegration of the Islam world.<sup>4</sup>

#### The New Armenia an Ally Of the Crusaders

After the death of Prince Rouben in 1035 his son Prince Constantine succeeded him. Thus Rouben founded a new Armenian dynasty — the Roubenian-Bagratid Dynasty. Constantine I extended his father's patrimony by wresting from the Mohammedans many fortresses and at the same time defending the new state against the ventures of the neighboring Emirs and Atabegs. His reign (1095-1100) was marked by an event of basic importance — the entry of the first crusade into Cilicia.

Prince Constantine and the Armenians resolutely stood by the Christians of the west and it might be said that their active aid played a decisive role in the success of the first Crusade.

"When the crusaders of the first Crusade," writes Laurent, "completely exhausted, found themselves in a bad plight

<sup>4</sup>For a detailed study of the history of the Near East during the Middle Ages, see the works of Rene Grousset, *Histoire des Croisades*, Paris, 1935-1939, and *L'Empire du Levant*, Paris, 1946.

before the passes of the Taurus mountains, the Armenians welcomed these Christians as brothers who had come from afar and belonged to the same race of mercenaries whose valor they had witnessed for centuries, having fought side by side with them in the Byzantine armies. The Armenians guided them. They provisioned them. They made possible the occupation of Antioch after the capture of Jerusalem. Without the Armenians the first Crusade in the plains of Cilicia and Cappadocea would have had the same sad ending of the Latin invasions whose aim later became the capture of Palestine from Asia Minor.<sup>5</sup>

Upon their arrival at Nicea the Crusaders sent messengers to the Armenians. An Armenian envoy accompanied Baldwin of Flanders, the true brother of Godfrey and guided his march through Asia Minor.<sup>6</sup>

Baldwin who headed the army of the Crusaders, upon the counsel of the Armenians, detoured to the east, namely, instead of heading for the Cilician plain, he turned to the Taurus mountains, toward Marash, and thus came in direct contact with the Armenian forces. Then he marched on Edessa (Ourfa). As Stevenson notes<sup>7</sup>, although he could not completely subdue the region still he established a principedom there, himself at the head, through the aid of the Armenians. Thus the new principality became the neighbor and ally of Constantine, and Baldwin cemented the alliance by marrying Constantine's niece.

Having reinforced his army with the Armenian contingents, Baldwin proceeded to join the Crusaders who had arrived at the Plain of Cilicia, preparing for the siege of Antioch.

The greater part of the Crusade army had arrived at Cilicia in a lamentable condition. They were wholly spent and found their rest in the winter of 1097-1098 only through the aid of the Armenians who provisioned that army until the spring when the Crusaders finally received supplies and reinforcements because the Italian fleets still controlled the Mediterranean.<sup>8</sup>

During the siege of Antioch the Armenians proved highly valuable allies of the Crusaders and Prince Constantine was rewarded by them with the title of Marquis for his services to their cause.

By her very existence prolonging a system of new states to the north which the Crusaders would establish on the eastern seacoast, the Armenians rendered a great service to their cause. Thereafter Armenia was to take part in their fights and would play a highly important role by discomfiting two of their most formidable foes, the Sultanates of Konia and Aleppo, to say nothing of the Byzantine Empire which, blinded by its religious hatred, took a consistently hostile attitude toward the Crusaders.

Besides, it should be noted that one of the standing causes of Crusader weakness was the distance which separated them from their western bases, rendering the supply of reinforcements and provisions both difficult and generally inadequate.

This is the reason why the support on the spot, be it in the form of provisions, or active cooperation, or especially military effectives, was of such vital importance to the Crusaders. The Armenians were pre-eminently a warrior race and the importance of their support consisted of the very fact that they constituted the only militarily available element in the East on

<sup>5</sup>J. Laurent, *L'Arménie entre Byzance et l'Islam*, Paris, 1919, p. 6-7.

<sup>6</sup>W. Stevenson, *The First Crusade*, The Cambridge Medieval History, Vol. V, p. 286.

<sup>7</sup>W. Stevenson, *The Crusaders in the East*, Cambridge, 1907, p. 22.

<sup>8</sup>W. Stevenson, *The First Crusade*, p. 289. See also C. Oman, *History of the Art of War in the Middle Ages*, London, 1898, p. 238.



which the Crusaders could rely.<sup>9</sup>

On the other hand it is obvious that, by coming and establishing the Latin states in the East (all westerners who had come to the East in the wake of the Crusaders were designated by this name) the Crusaders rendered the New Armenia a great service by pulling her out of her isolation.

### The Victorious Struggle of New Armenia Against Byzantium and the Mohammedans (1100-1187)

After the death of Prince Constantine I his two sons, Thoros (Theodor) I and then Leon (Levon) I succeeded each other at the head of the new state which now had become the Barony of New Armenia. Thoros (1100-1120) was forced to wage war against both Byzantium and the Turks.

The Crusaders had indeed taken upon themselves the liberation of the cities of Asia Minor and their return to Byzantium. To this end they drove out the Turkish populations of these cities and towns. In their minds, however, this promise pertained only to Anatolia, but the officers and the army of Byzantium following in the wake of the Crusaders to appropriate the territories which they had liberated nevertheless settled in the plain of Cilicia.<sup>10</sup>

From the beginning of the Twelfth century, however, Byzantium went even farther. She began to entertain pretensions on the principalities of Armenia, Edessa and Antioch. It was against Byzantium, therefore, that the Armenians were forced to wage war in order to defend their possessions, to extend the Armenian dominations over Cilicia, and at the same time to defend the Crusader states against the encroachments of the Greeks.

It must be stated that Byzantium found auxiliaries among a series of Armenian

princes of the region who had been settled there before Prince Rouben, had recognized the sovereignty of Byzantium, considered themselves her proteges, and were enemies of the Roubenian-Bagratid family which was trying to establish a new independent Armenian state.

The most noted of these Armenian families who were attached to Byzantium and against whom the Roubenian-Bagratid Dynasties, more than all the rest, was forced to wage war, was a scion of a baron (Nakharar) of the Gandzak region. The Byzantine emperors had given him permission to settle in Lampron (modern Tarsus-Tchai), whose members, be it from gratitude toward Byzantium or hatred of the Roubenian-Bagratids, fought for a long time by the side of the Byzantines.

From 1102-1103 Thoros aided the Crusaders in repelling the Byzantine attacks against Edessa and Antioch. Then, having allied with Tancrede, Prince of Antioch, he took the offensive and wrested from the Byzantines the cities of Anazarbe and Sis.

In 1107-1108 he repulsed an attack of Seljuk Turks. Then, having allied with an Armenian named Kogh Basil who had become master of the Marash region, in 1109 he inflicted a decisive defeat on the Seljuk Turks, capturing their chieftain who had directed the attack and who already called himself the Sultan of Armenia.<sup>11</sup>

Again, it was during the reign of Thoros I that the assassination of Kaghik II, the last king of Armenia Major was avenged. Armenian troops captured the Castle of Cyzistra and put to death the three Greeks who had hanged the last Bagratid king.<sup>12</sup>

The name of Thoros I is associated with the construction of the famous monastery of Trazargh where many members of the

<sup>11</sup>Tournebiz, *Histoire politique et religieuse de l'Arménie*, Paris, 1910, p. 171.

<sup>12</sup>F. Macier, *Armenia*, The Cambridge Medieval History, Vol. IV, p. 169.

<sup>9</sup>C. Oman, *Ibid.*, p. 257.

<sup>10</sup>Oman, p. 234.

reigning dynasty were buried.

The successor of Thoros I, his brother Leon I who ruled the barony or principality of New Armenia (1129-1137) continued his work. He expelled the Byzantines from the greater part of Cilicia, occupied the cities of Mamistra (Missis), Adana and Tarsus, thus extending the boundaries of the new state as far as the Mediterranean.

Besides, he repulsed many attacks of the Seljuk Turks. This Seljuk hatred of New Armenia, as Jacques deMorgan has pointed out, was sustained with the gold of the Byzantine court which had perpetual designs on Cilicia and even the principality of Antioch.<sup>13</sup> In 1135 Leon's brother Stephan took the City of Marash from the Seljuks.

But in 1137 Emperor John II Comnenus of Byzantium (1118-1143), taking advantage of a feud between Leon I and the princes of Antioch over the possession of the fortifications of southern Amanos, namely the mountain range dominating the Gulf of Alexandretta, invaded Cilicia. Leon I fought his way back into the mountains but eventually was forced to surrender. He died in captivity and for eight years (1137-1146) the New Armenia was the theater of Greek and Seljuk devastations.

One of the four sons of Leon I was killed by the Byzantines, the second, Thoros, was taken prisoner, and finally, the other two, Stephan and Mleh found asylum with Sultan Noureddin of Aleppo. It fell to the lot of Thoros to avenge the death of his father and to liberate the land.

Disguised as a merchant of a Genoese or Venitian ship, he made his escape from Constantinople and, via Cyprus, he landed at Antioch where he raised the people in revolt and having headed many thousands, and supported by his brothers Stephan and Mleh, after fierce battles, he reconquered

the land, first the fortresses of Vakha, Simankha and Avindz, then the plain of Cilicia with the cities of Anazarb and Adana and finally the City of Sis.

Thereupon Emperor Manuel Comnenus (1143-1180) sent an army of 12,000 under the command of Andronicus Comnenus who, with the aid of anti-Roubenian-Bagratid Armenian nobles repulsed the army of Thoros. The latter retired to his fortress of Mamistra which the Byzantines promptly put under siege. The condition of the Armenians was serious because, taken by surprise, they had had no time to provision the fort for a long siege. But they all realized that this was the time to do or die. One night the Armenian army sallied forth from the fort and engaged the Byzantine army reinforced by Armenian deserters, ending in a great victory.<sup>14</sup> The Armenians took many enemy officers, prisoners who later were freed in return for great ransoms.

Emperor Manuel then incited Masoud, the Sultan of Konia to make war on New Armenia but Thoros repulsed him twice. The Emperor now made an alliance with Renaud de Chatillon who had a quarrel with Thoros over the possession of the Castle of Amanos in a second attempt to invade Armenia but this clash, too, ended in a new victory for the Armenians near Alexandretta.<sup>15</sup>

In a third attempt at the conquest of Armenia, in 1158, the Emperor personally headed the campaign with a force of 20,000. He occupied the plain of Cilicia but Thoros retreated into the mountains and retrenched himself at the Castle of Dadjekikar and kept up the struggle while his brother Stephen defended the region of Marash.

Finally in 1159 a peace was concluded

<sup>13</sup>Morgan, p. 173.

<sup>14</sup>Macler, p. 170.

<sup>15</sup>Macler, p. 170.

through the mediation of Baldwin III, king of Jerusalem, leaving to Armenia the greater part of the Cilician Plain while the Emperor kept possession of the important cities of Anazarb and Mamistra.

The ensuing years of the reign of Thoros II were marked by victorious campaigns against the Sultans of Iconium (Konia) and Aleppo in which latter case the Armenians themselves went to the aid of the Crusaders against their formidable enemy.

Thinking he could profit from this war in his attempt at the reconquest of Cilicia, after first having tricked Thoros' brother Stephen, the Byzantine Emperor sent a new army into Armenia; however, in the decisive battle which took place near Tarsus the Byzantine army was defeated by the Armenian forces (1163).<sup>16</sup> Thereafter the Plain of Cilicia was finally severed from Byzantium and became an integral part of New Armenia. The work begun by Constantine I which strove to bring all the Armenian princes under the authority of his family dynasty, including even those who were considered tributaries of Byzantium now could be regarded as realized.

This valiant prince, Thoros II, who, together with Rouben I and Leon II, was the real founder of the New Armenia, transferred the succession to his son Rouben II.

In the reign of this king Armenia went through a stormy period, caused by the intrigues of his uncle Mleh. The latter who once had joined the ranks of the Templars, now renounced the faith and, becoming a Mohammedan, entered the service of Noureddin, the Sultan of Aleppo, and with his aid, replaced Rouben II and became the master of New Armenia. Thrice he repulsed the Greek armies but finally he was assassinated by the Armenians in Sis.

The next prince, Rouben III, was the son of Stephan, the other brother of Thoros II who had defended Marash so heroically. A prince who was endowed with the best of intentions, Rouben III was fortunate in having beside him his brother Leon, the future Leon II. Bohemund III, the sovereign of Antioch who had designs on Cilicia, invited Rouben to his palace, perfidiously made him prisoner, and then attacked Armenia which now was without a master. However, Leon, the King's brother, proved under the circumstances that he was a great military figure. Heading the army, he repulsed the forces of Bohemund and forced him to release his brother.<sup>17</sup>

Upon his return to his land Rouben, as in the past, proved himself a monarch of boundless goodness, giving his country a wise administration. He built many cities and monasteries and made numerous gifts. A deeply devout person, he finally retired in a monastery, leaving the government to his brother Leon.

### The Crusader States And the Counter-Attack Of Islam

Before covering the life of Leon II, the greatest sovereign the New Armenia knew, a brief outline of the Middle East during the Twelfth century is necessary.

After the success of the first Crusade and the capture of Jerusalem the crusaders founded a series of states called the Latin principalities of the East the first of which, the Barony of Edessa under Baldwin of Flanders, was situated to the east of Cilicia, the other three were: the Principality of Antioch (under Bohemund), the Barony of Tripoli (under Raymond of Toulouz), and the Kingdom of Jerusalem (under Godfrey of Bouillon) all to the south.

All these principalities were established

<sup>16</sup>Macler, p. 171.

<sup>17</sup>Macler, p. 171.

by 1100 and their totality represented a little Europe, patterned after the great Europe. Feudalism cast root here even in a worse form than at any other country in the west. The hierarchical order and all details of feudal justice were settled before the famous courts of Jerusalem.

It should be observed that the conversion of the possessions of the Crusaders into so many separate principalities, the product of the feudal spirit, was a serious weakness for the creation of an homogeneous state representing a collective force which alone could have enabled them successfully to resist the great dangers to which they would be exposed.

At first the Crusader states and New Armenia were forced to wage war against their enemies who, themselves, were deeply divided. The Sultanates of Iconium (Konia), Aleppo, Homs and Damascus, the first consisting of Seljuk Turks and the last three of Arabs who often were dominated by the Seljuks, fought separately, each in its own interest, and sometimes against one another. They had no relation to the Fatimite Califs of Egypt who at the time belonged to a different sect of Islam (the Shii Sect) and were enemies of the Seljuks.

The Crusader principalities, therefore, had no difficulty in resisting their enemies, especially when the Kingdom of Jerusalem struck an alliance with the Sultanate of Damascus while the encroachments of the Aleppo Sultans were always frustrated by the Armenians.

But before long, beginning 1127, a new Mohammedan state came into existence around Mosul under the leadership of the famous Atabeg Zangi who was to become the most formidable foe of the Crusaders. In 1144 Zangi inflicted the first setback of the Crusaders by capturing Edessa (Ourfa). This was the first reverse which brought about the Second Crusade which, however, never made the Holy Land.

Zangi's son Noureddin captured Damascus and having penetrated the Kingdom of Jerusalem, threatened both Jerusalem and St. John d'Acre.

But it was destined to Saladin, one of the generals of Noureddin, to inflict on the Crusaders such blows from which they never would recover. Saladin was a Kurd, born in Takrit, the scion of an Adjanakan family in southern Armenia. His father and uncles had been generals in the service of the Atabeg of Mosul, and Saladin himself was brought up in Damascus which at the time was one of the centers of the civilized Mohammedan world. Saladin became the greatest figure which the Kurdish race ever produced. We find many traits in his character, such as chivalry, the absence of fanaticism, and moderation which rank him among the most attractive figures of the mediæval east.

As a soldier of the army which Noureddin had sent to Egypt whose Fatimite Calif hated the Sunnite Seljuks as much as they did the Crusaders, he eventually took over the power and founded there a new dynasty which was to be known as the Dynasty of the Mamelukes and imposed upon the land the religion of the Sunnite Sect of Islam.

Thus, having brought about the religious unity of the Moslem world in his contest against the Crusaders, before long he achieved the political unity by his capture of Damascus, Homs and Aleppo (1174-1182). The Mohammedan world, now, under a single command, carried the fight to the Kingdom of Jerusalem and, in 1187, he inflicted upon the Crusaders a decisive defeat near Tiberiad, a defeat which soon brought about the capitulation of Jerusalem.

Thus, the Crusader possessions were shrunk to the Kingdom of Jerusalem which, however, did not include the holy city but consisted of a long and narrow strip

of land along the seacoast, including the cities of Acre and Tyre as well as the principalities of Tripoli and Antioch.

### Leon II Medzakordz<sup>18</sup>

(1187-1219)

Now that we can place his reign in its proper setting, we may return to Leon II whom history has endowed with the title of Medzakordz. He was one of the greatest men Armenia produced in a millenium. When he succeeded his brother Rouben III the foundations of the new state had firmly been laid. Still there was the structure to be built. The New Armenia had to be endowed with a strong administdative, economic and military structure, and there remained the crowning act, namely, to raise the Barony to the rank of kingdom. This was the task of this great monarch.

In the words of Victor Langlois, the reigns of the first successors of Prince Rouben were taken up in fighting the combined forces of the Byzantines, the Armenian nobles, and the neighboring Mohammedan states. All that the first Roubenians could accomplish was the conquest of a new fatherland. But there still remained the creation of a regular governmental system, the West's recognition of the New Armenia as an independent kingdom, and its transformation into a strong, stable state. This historic mission was the lot of Leon II.<sup>19</sup> It was through and by him that the cause of New Armenia finally was won.

His long reign of 32 years (1187-1219)

<sup>18</sup>Etymologically the Armenian word Medzakordz is a compound of two words: Medz, meaning *great*, and Kordz, meaning *work*. Medzakordz, the title which Armenian historians gave to Leon II, means a Man of Great Works, Great Deeds, or Great Accomplishments, meaning a great builder, organizer and administrator.

<sup>19</sup>V. Langlois, *Essai historique sur la constitution sociale et politique de l'Arménie sous les rois de la dynastie roubenienne*, St. Petersburg, 1860, p. 44.

was one of the richest and most productive in the history of the Armenian people. The country experienced a prosperity and a stability which was unique in its annals.

Like many other kings of Armenia Leon II first of all was a soldier king. The active defense of the land against the surrounding enemies from all sides was a prerequisite of his enterprise. He had scarcely ascended the throne when in 1187 he was forced to wage a fierce war against the Sultans of Aleppo and Damascus. This first war of Leon II is of great historical signigance because, by so doing, the Armenians invited upon themselves and deflected a part of the Mohammedan forces at the very time when Saladin was embarking on a decisive campaign against the Kingdom of Jerusalem.<sup>20</sup>

In 1182 Leon stopped the advance of Rustem, the Sultan of Ikonium, upon Sis and, later, in a decisive battle near Marash destroyed his army. Rustem was killed in this battle.<sup>21</sup> Then, directing his forces to the West, Leon conquered the Province of Isaurus from the Sultanate of Iconium. These acquisitions represented highly valuable conquests and doubled the new state's coastal area on the Mediterrenean.

Leon II moved the capital of New Armenia to Sis from Tarsus, rightly reasoning that, being situated in a mountainous region which eventually became the cradle and center of the New Armenia, that city was more suited for a capital than an exposed city like Tarsus.

Besides Leon exerted tireless efforts to enlarge the military power of the new state. He increased the effective force of the army, paid great attention to its training, and took into his service many German, English, French and Italian officers. He

<sup>20</sup>W. Stevenson, *The Crusaders in the East*, p. 243.

<sup>21</sup>Tournebiz, p. 189.



also devoted much time to the fortification of the country's boundaries.

But seeing that the future of his country was closely tied up with the cause and the might of the west, he laid the foundation of a policy of cooperation between Europe and the East through Europe's representatives the Crusaders in which policy his marriages with Isabel of Antioch and later Sybil of Lusignan constituted a definite part. He was in constant contact with the West. On March 12, 1191, for instance, he went to Cyprus to attend the wedding of the English King, Richard the Lion Hearted, to a Princess of Navarre.<sup>22</sup>

When as a result of the disaster sustained by the Kingdom of Jerusalem, the German Emperor Frederick Barbarossa decided to launch a new crusade, the steps in the expedition were worked out in a detailed German plan. The Emperor found a friend and ally in the person of Leon II who promised him the support and the cooperation of Armenia.

It is a fact of history that Frederick Barbarossa was revolving a gigantic plan in his mind — the restoration of the Roman Empire in its integrity by doubling the Germanic Holy Empire with the addition of an Eastern empire under the sovereignty of the West. In this grandiose plan, as Rohrbach has pointed out, Frederick Barbarossa reserved an extremely important role for New Armenia and it was for this reason that he promised Leon the royal crown.

H. Prutz, the historiographer of Frederick Barbarossa, presents the exciting relations between the Emperor and Armenia in following words: "As the most advanced post of Christianity in the East, Armenia presented great importance. Frederick Barbarossa comprehended this fact, and con-

versely, it was to the interest of the Armenians to establish close relations with this powerful monarch. The victorious war in which Leon had conquered the Province of Isaurus from the Sultanate of Ikonium, made the Armenian Prince the natural ally of Frederick. Even before the arrival of the German army in Cilicia relations between the two already had been established. The Emperor who measured the importance of Armenia by its true worth, decided to revive the name of the Roman Emperor in that part of the globe where he was forgotten, to recognize Leon as his feudal vassal, and to profit from Armenia's service in his plan to establish his supremacy in the East."<sup>23</sup>

Prutz in his book describes the conditions under which the German army, exhausted, and having lost the greater part of its horses and baggage, entered the Armenian frontier after having annihilated the Seljuk Turks at the Battle of Konia. Frederick Barbarossa was received at the passes of Taurus Mountains by Leon's envoys who confirmed the Armenian Prince's promise of aid to the Emperor. The Emperor was assured that the provisions which his army was in immediate need were already stored up in the City of Isaurus. Led by the Armenians, the Emperor's army entered the passes of Taurus and the march was taken up amid great difficulties due to the nature of the terrain. Finally the army arrived at the Plain of Cilicia and the larger part of the troops entered the City of Isaurus. The Emperor, who had been following his army at a short distance, together with his retinue and the Armenian emissaries stopped at the banks of the River Seleph. This was on June 10, 1190. After the dinner, suffering from the extreme heat, the

<sup>22</sup>J. Burtt, *The People of Ararat*, London, 1926, p. 37.

<sup>23</sup>H. Prutz, *Friedrich I*, Danzig, 1874, Vol. III, pp. 347-348.

Emperor decided to take a swim in the river despite the fact that his attendants besought him to give up the idea. He entered the water and started to swim, but before long, stricken by cramps, he disappeared in the waves. His German attendants and the Armenians hastened to his rescue but they were able to come up only with his lifeless body.<sup>24</sup>

When Leon, accompanied by the Armenian Catholicos, arrived at Isaurus to welcome Frederick Barbarossa he found the German camp in desolation as he heard the news of the death of his great ally.

The son and successor of Frederick Barbarossa, Emperor Henry VI, proved his gratitude to the ally of his father, and true to his memory, he granted the royal crown to Leon II.

On January 6, 1199, Cardinal Conrad of Wittelsbach, Archbishop of Mayence, the Legate of Pope Celestine II and representative of the Emperor, in the Church of Holy Wisdom of Tarsus, in the presence of fifteen bishops, thirty-nine Armenian princes, and a company of Latin knights, presented to Leon the royal crown while Catholicos Gregory VII consecrated the new king who now became the feudatory of the Western Empire in the East.

It is pertinent to note here that the crown which Henry VI offered to Leon II had to do with his private plans. The heir of his father's ambition — the ideal of a universal monarchy, Henry was mulling the idea of the probability of annexing the Byzantine Empire to the West. By insuring the support of New Armenia and Cyprus, he was paving the way for capturing the Byzantine Empire from the rear.<sup>25</sup>

When the Byzantine Emperor was informed of Leon's coronation he hastened to send him a royal crown of gold and

precious stones and donated him a royal standard bearing the image of a lion (this accounts for the appearance of the lion on the coat of arms of the New Armenia whereas the eagle had been the symbol of power of the ancient kingdoms). Leon accepted these gifts as simple presents and, in his turn, he had the presence of mind to reciprocate the Emperor's generosity, thus to indicate that he considered himself the vassal of the Western Empire and not that of Byzantium.

It was now up to Leon to convert his country into a truly European state with its institutions and spirit. And this was the task to which he set himself with all his vigor. In the last pages of this chapter we shall give the general picture of this venture in all its phases.

Suffice it to mention here the adoption of the Antiochian Code as the law of New Armenia,<sup>26</sup> the creation of a series of tribunals, the organization of the kingdom and the court after the European model, the adoption of the principles of Western feudalism, the establishment of close economic relations with Italy and Western Europe, the encouragement of industry, and the founding of schools, orphanages, hospitals, monasteries, and the development of close ties with the great religio-military orders of the Crusaders.

Despite the fact that he was constantly forced to fight against external enemies, Leon was able to accomplish this exacting task. He was forced to wage a war against the principality of Antioch in order to re-establish there the rights of a relative, Rouben Raymond, which had been violated by a usurper. Meanwhile he was attacked by the Sultan of Iconium (Konia) whose alliance had been bought by the Prince of Antioch. Leon met both of these adversaries and succeeded in crushing

<sup>24</sup>Prutz, pp. 348-349.

<sup>25</sup>A. Vasiliev, *Histoire de l'Empire byzantine*, Paris, 1932, Vol. II, pp. 94-95.

<sup>26</sup>See the study of Alishan, *Les Assises d'Antioche*, Venice, 1876.

them successively, then he captured Antioch, and this despite the fact that the Knights of Templars in his service, hired at a costly price, conspired against Armenia.<sup>27</sup>

Later, when the Sultan of Aleppo, the son of the great Saladin, had the audacity of demanding tribute from him, Leon marched against him with his army, inflicted a crushing defeat upon him, and made him pay the very tribute he had demanded.<sup>28</sup>

Toward the end of his reign, in 1217, the Sultan of Iconium laid siege to the City of Kapan. The Turks succeeded in repelling an army which had gone to the aid of the besieged, but Leon took the offensive on the Sultan's territories and the latter, to defend his land, lifted the siege and was forced to sue for peace.<sup>29</sup>

These were the essential lines of this great reign, marked, above all, by a close union which Leon established with the West. He felt, writes Heyd, that for him and his successors, a close agreement with the Western powers and the Crusader kingdoms was a necessity for the success of his contest with the Mohammedan princes and the Byzantine Emperors. After arriving at this conviction, Leon adjusted all his acts to this essential plan. He made an alliance with Frederick Barbarossa, became the feudatory of the Holy Roman Empire and the formidable auxiliary of the Latin states in the East. He tried with all his means to interest Europe in the prosperity of his kingdom. He succeeded in adopting the institutions of Medieval West, in developing Armenia's commercial exchange with Europe, in distributing estates to the Barons and great religio-military orders, and finally, by trying to bring about a

rapprochement between the Church of Armenia and the Roman Catholic Church.

Tournebize sums up in following words the character of this great monarch: "With Leon II the Principality of Cilicia attained its pinnacle. His reign, even after going through the crucible of historical criticism, is still worthy of admiration. To win the royal crown, what energy, what tenacity, and what flexibility he brought to light! His historians glorify his valor which was real, his skill in horsemanship which was extraordinary, his cheerful and amiable disposition. The salient trait of his character, however, is his prudence, the refinement of the diplomat, and the perspicacity of the statesman. Skillfully protected by alliances, he knew how to interest the principal Christian thrones of the time in the prosperity of his family and kingdom. He also knew how to assemble around himself men of merit and to attach them to his cause, and when he had the need to speak to a wise counsellor, or a man of the sword or the pen, he spared nothing to insure his services. Among this elite, of course, the military predominated, and among the princes who commanded the seventy-two fortresses of New Armenia mentioned by ancient historians, alongside the Armenian names we find Greeks, Germans, and especially the French (such as Roger du Mont, Thomas Moslebrun, Guillaumne d'Isle and many others)."<sup>31</sup>

### The End of the Crusader States

It is pertinent once again to draw a brief outline of the general picture of the Middle East during the Thirteenth century to enable the reader to understand the history of New Armenia under the successors of Leon II in its entirety.

After the successful campaigns of Saladin which brought about the loss of Jerusalem

<sup>27</sup>Macler, p. 173.

<sup>28</sup>Macler, p. 173.

<sup>29</sup>Macler, p. 174.

<sup>30</sup>W. Heyd, *Histoire du Commerce du Levant au Moyen Age*, Leipzig, 1923, Vol. I, p. 360.

<sup>31</sup>Tournebize p. 192-193.

the most important Crusades of the Thirteenth century, for instance the Fifth Crusade (1219-1221) and the Seventh Crusade (1248-1249) were aimed at Egypt which now had become the center of Islam power, but none of them was a decisive success. The Fourth Crusade (1201-1204), by turning against Constantinople, was even disastrous in breaking the Greek Empire's power of resistance.

On the coast of Syria, the New Armenia as well as the Crusader states found themselves in a dire position, subject to the onslaughts of the Mohammedans.

The only notable success of the Crusaders which was won not by arms but through negotiations between Frederick II and Saladin's successors was the reoccupation of the City of Jerusalem for a brief period (1229-1234).

However, toward the middle of the Thirteenth century an event of great importance took place. This was the advent of the Mongols into the Middle East. By the beginning of the Thirteenth century Genghiz Khan already had seized the Armenia Major. Under the command of his grandson Hulagu the Mongols flooded over Mesopotamia and Syria, driving out the troops of the Mameluke Sultans of Egypt and massacring the Turks and the Arabs.

If the occupation of Major Armenia by the Mongols was a calamity for the Armenians, it was not, however, the same for New Armenia. Indeed, the Mongols attacked neither New Armenia nor the Crusader States and concentrated their onslaught on the Turks and the Arabs, thus restoring the balance of power in favor of the Christian states.

The Armenians even nursed the idea of converting the Mongols to Christianity but they failed. After sweeping off the Seljuks and the Arabs, the Mongols stopped at the gates of Egypt but they could never deliver the coup de grace to the Mameluke

Sultans who, ever since the time of Saladin, had turned into the most powerful and most dangerous enemies of New Armenia and the Latin states of the East.

Soon the Mongols retired toward New Armenia and Persia, and the Mameluke Sultans of Egypt, having recaptured Damascus and Aleppo, again attacked all that had remained from the possessions of the Crusaders in the East.

The Principality of Antioch ceased to exist in 1268. The famous Krak which had been an important fortress of the Knight Templars fell in 1271. In 1289 it was the turn of the Barony of Tripoli. Then in 1291, the last remnants of the Kingdom of Jerusalem — reduced to a few ports — disappeared in turn.

In 1291, nearly 200 years after the First Crusade, in the Eastern coastal region there was left only one Christian state — the Kingdom of New Armenia which continued the struggle for nearly another century all by itself.

### **The Hetum Dynasty and The Mongol Alliance (1200-1300)**

Leon II<sup>32</sup> left behind no son but only a daughter, Zabel (Isabelle) who ascended the throne after his death in 1220, aided by a council of Regents. During the following six years (1220-1226) the New Armenia was in reality governed by one of those regents, the Grand Baron Constantine, one of the former generals of Leon who concentrated the whole power in his hand. He

<sup>32</sup>Contrary to many historians but following the example of Macler whose work served as our pattern in writing the history of this period, we preserved the principle of a single, inseparable succession of the rulers of the New Armenia instead of drawing two lines of succession, namely, the Barons and the Kings. Thus, We have preserved the title of Leon II for Leon Medrakordz, instead of calling him Leon I from 1199 when he wore the royal crown. As a sequence, in our history the last king of New Armenia is called Leon VI instead of Leon V.

belonged to the famous Hetumian family of Lambron which for a long time was one of the main props of Byzantine influence in Cilicia before it turned into one of the chief feudatories of the Rubenian Dynasty.

Immediately after the death of Leon, Constantine was forced to defend the country against Ruben Raymond of Antioch, a pretender to the throne of Armenia who invaded Cilicia and even seized Tarsus. But Constantine defeated him at Mamistra and took him prisoner.

Concerned about finding a husband for Zabel and a king for New Armenia, Constantine married Zabel to Philip of Antioch. But, upon his accession, the latter became a tool in the hands of his father Bohemund. His policy tended definitely to replace the Armenians by Latins and to annex New Armenia to Antioch.

Constantine drove Philip away and married Zabel to his son Hetum. Thus, Hetum I (1226-1270) founded a new dynasty — the Hetumian Dynasty — which succeeded the Roubenian-Bagratid Dynasty.

Profiting from these troubles the Turks of Iconium seized the greater part of Isaurus, the western part of the country. It was Hetum's first task to reoccupy these territories. After their victories over the Crusaders the Mameluke Sultans of Egypt had become the strongest adversaries of New Armenia, and, to resist them, Hetum I relied on the Mongols. He journeyed as far as Karakorum to solicit the alliance of the Mongols, a fabulous trip which attests to the courage of the Armenian.

During the invasions of Genghiz Khan threatening Asia Minor, New Armenia was a member of a confederation of Anatolian states (mostly Seljuk Turks) who repelled the Mongols. But after the death of Genghiz Khan one of his grandsons, Ogdai Khan, turned to the south, against the Mohammedan states of Syria and Mesopo-

tamia who were tributaries of the Egyptian Sultans. Hetum made an alliance with Ogdai Khan.

The Armenian forces joined those of the Mongols who were under the command of Hulagu Khan, the brother of Ogdai Khan. It was the plan of the Allies to invade Syria and Palestine to liberate Jerusalem which the Mongols had promised to deliver to the Christians, contenting themselves with the remaining territories of Syria and Mesopotamia. The Armenians and the Mongols assembled their forces in Edessa and defeated the Sultan of Aleppo.

Meanwhile, however, the Mongol Khan Ogdai died and Hulagu was obligated to return to Central Asia to succeed his brother. The Egyptian Sultans succeeded in repulsing the Mongol army which had been left behind by Hulagu, then they captured Antioch and invaded New Armenia, occupying the Plain of Cilicia where they perpetrated countless atrocities and destruction. Having taken refuge in the mountains of his country, Hetum was forced to surrender the Castle of Derbessak to the Sultan as price of the peace. Before long Hetum retired to a monastery leaving the throne to his son Leon III.

Leon III, who reigned 1270 to 1289, was first of all forced to face a revolt of discontented Armenian nobles. Taking advantage of the situation, the Sultan of Egypt renewed his attack on Armenia, seized the Plain of Cilicia and entered Tarsus (1273) whose buildings were put to fire, part of the population were massacred and the rest were taken captive. As usual the king and the remnants of the Armenian army took refuge in the mountains of Taurus and the resistance was continued. The fortress of Sis — the capital of the kingdom — repulsed all the enemy assaults. Then in 1276, Leon, having assembled around himself the whole of the Armenian forces, took the counter offensive, suc-



ceeded in drawing the enemy army into an ambushade and cut it to pieces. The Sultan of Egypt, Bibars, mortally wounded by an arrow, fled the battlefield and died in Damascus.<sup>33</sup>

The Sultan of Iconium utilized the situation to invade, on his part, the western part of the country, however Leon, once having expelled the Mamelukes from the land, turned against the Seljuk Turks and forced them to retreat.

Then, having joined his forces with the Mongols, Leon marched on Syria. The Armenian and Mongol armies met the Sultan's army near Homs on the Orontes. The battle already was won when, toward evening, the Mongol commander Mangu Timur gave the order to retreat, whereupon, Leon was forced to return to Armenia. The Mongol Khan made an object lesson of Mangu Timur and his army for this inexplicable conduct. He had all the generals decapitated and soldiers were disgraced by being forced to wear women's clothes.<sup>34</sup>

Leon III was succeeded by his son Hetum II (1289-1305). Against the powerful Memluke Sultans of Egypt who had annihilated the last remnants of the Crusader states in the Eastern coastal regions, the new king continued to rely on the Mongols. He tried to establish friendly relations with Cyprus and the Byzantine Empire which, together with New Armenia, represented the last Christian states in the Near and Middle East. It was to this end that he married one of his sisters, Mariam, to Emperor Michael IX of Byzantium and his second sister, Zabel, to Amaury de Tyr, the brother of Henry II, King of Cyprus.

A talented writer and historian, Hetum II many times retired to the monastery to devote himself to his studies, leaving the throne alternately to his brothers Thoros, Sempad and Constantine, yet he resumed the power each time the circumstances demanded it. These returns to power occasioned bloody encounters with some of his brothers who, having known the taste of power, were reluctant to cede the throne to its real owner.

From the very beginning of his reign Hetum was attacked by the Sultan of Egypt who in 1292 captured Romkia, the seat of the Catholicos, after a siege of thirty-three days. He massacred the population and took the Catholicos prisoner. Hetum finally was able to repel the Sultan's forces, the latter being forced to withdraw his troops to meet the Crusaders who had laid seige to Alexandria. Under the circumstances, the Sultan released the Armenian Catholicos and made peace with the Armenians.

A few years later the Viceroy of Damascus, Susamich, invaded New Armenia but he was defeated by Hetum and forced to retreat.<sup>35</sup>

Then the king of New Armenia, having allied himself with the Mongols under the command of Kazan Khan, invaded Syria. The aim of this invasion was to reach Palestine and to liberate Jerusalem. However, before long, the Mongol Khan was forced to return to Persia with his army to suppress a revolt. The Armenian army, left to its own resources, at first achieved some successes, but finally, in view of the numerical superiority of the Mohammedan forces and the heavy losses itself had sustained, gave up the venture.

(To be continued)

<sup>33</sup>F. Macler, *Armenia, The Cambridge Medieval History*, Vol. VI, p. 176.

<sup>34</sup>Macler, p. 176.

<sup>35</sup>Macler, p. 177.

## FROM MYTILENE TO AYVALIK

ELIZABETH N. KOUMYAN

"Look, how clear blue is the sky, and how calm is the water," I said turning to my husband. "I wish there were a bit of a breeze coming from somewhere," he answered.

We were sitting in front of a side walk cafe at the water front in Mytilene Island, waiting for our small boat to take us across to Ayvalik, Turkey.

It was already two o'clock in the afternoon and we had been sitting there more than an hour, sipping lemonade to quench our thirst. It was very hot, the stores were closed, and the streets deserted. All had gone home for the noon siesta, except for a few people who were sitting at different side walk cafes. They probably were the ones whose houses were too far away or who had come from surrounding villages.

That morning, at 11 o'clock, word had reached us at the top of the hill, where our two story rented house was located, that the boat had come in, and that it would leave for Ayvalik at one o'clock sharp. After preparing hurriedly and filling our two suit cases, we started off from our house at 12 o'clock in order to have time to buy our tickets, and most of all, not to miss our boat, because these boats ran at unscheduled times. Only when passengers are waiting do they sail to or from Mytilene.

After living in America for 40 years, my

husband and I decided to pay a visit to his relatives who now were living in Mytilene, Greece. His Mother had died about ten years ago, but his two widowed sisters were still living there. My husband being the last child following four girls, my sister-in-laws were very anxious to see their young brother once more. After long planning, we took passage on April 1st, 1956 to Greece. We spent several weeks in Athens, then flew to Mytilene.

We were in Mytilene about a month, and while there, before the mid-summer heat set in, we decided to pay a short visit to Istanbul, our birthplace, and meanwhile to see there our many school friends who now were holding important positions as lawyers, teachers and principals of schools in Istanbul.

Mytilene is a hilly island, situated NE Aegean Sea between Greece and Turkey. Houses are closely built as if supporting each other on narrow cobblestone streets that ascend to the top of the hill. We were very happy to find a house on the top of the hill, which we rented for six months for about fifty dollars. From our house on clear nights we could almost touch the bright stars dappling blue sikes, and the lights of night fishing boats on the open sea in deep night were winking at us mysteriously. The lights of Ayvalik, Turkey,

on the opposite side, sparkled like diamonds on a chain. And on clear days we could see the small islands dotting the calm Aegean Sea.

That noon, two young boys shouldering our suit cases, my husband and I, our in-laws and a Greek neighbor started racing down the hill through narrow zigzagging streets. All were running down with expert steps except my husband and I, who were lagging behind. Some of our Greek neighbors saw us running and called from their doorways and upstairs windows, asking what was going on, and when they heard that we were going to Ayvalik, they closed their doors and went with us to the dock to see us off. In a few minutes so many neighbors had joined our party that we formed a large group running down the hill. The chickens lazily lying in the shade in the winding streets, fluttered around on our approach. It was quite a spectacle now, about fifteen people racing down hill noisily disturbing the noontide peace.

In my hurry to catch up with the rest, several times I stepped on slippery loose stones, slightly spraining my ankle, but I still ran with the noisy parade, the two boys with our suit cases leading us. Finally we reached the water front. But when we arrived there was not a passenger around, and our boat, tied at the harbor, was lazily bobbing her head under the noon sun.

After buying our tickets, we settled in one of the cafe chairs. The boys left us after getting their pay. A few people seeing there was no sight of the boat moving and no passengers around, left us at the sidewalk cafe and went back to their houses on the hill for their siesta, thinking that the boat might not leave until late afternoon. We did not dare to leave the place for fear of being absent when our boat left for Ayvalik.

Tired of this uncertainty we inquired of the Greek agent as to when the boat would

leave. He said that he did not know, but that we can ask *Choban*, shepherd, about it.

"Who is Choban?" we asked.

"He is the captain of the boat, and is sitting over there," he replied, nodding toward the third sidewalk cafe down the street, where a barefooted, portly man about sixty years old was sitting at a table with a water pitcher on it, eating his cheese and bread.

"Captain," we asked, "when will the boat leave?"

"As soon as the passengers gather," he said.

"When will they gather?" we inquired.

"It will not be long now, *Ogloom*, my children," he said.

At three o'clock in the afternoon we were getting very tired. The heat was sifting down through the awning under which we were sitting. The sidewalks were shimmering with the heat. To keep cool, we had already had a few bottles of lemonade and several cups of Turkish coffee. The uncertainty of waiting in the open that afternoon was frustrating, but wait we did. We had no choice.

Then around four o'clock, activities started. A few people approached from here and there, coming to open their stores. Life was starting to be interesting again. There was something welcoming about activities around, which made us hopeful and patient.

Then soon afterward, as if from nowhere, we saw several Turkish people, men and women, coming into sight with baskets and water pitchers in their hands. They all gathered near the sidewalk cafe where the Greek agent had his office inside.

We were joyful now that any minute our long and arduous waiting was going to be over and were rejoicing over it, when suddenly a lone, strange figure, dressed in Khaki shorts, a pack on his back and a sun helmet on his head, came and stood silently

a little away from us. Soon after, the Greek agent came out from his office and asked us if we would be kind enough to help this English gentleman, who could speak neither Greek nor Turkish, and was going to Ayvalik also. He added that this Englishman, had missed Chios, on the previous day, and had been carried on to Mytilene by mistake. We assured him that we would be glad to do whatever we could. This lone figure just stood apart, a bewildered look on his face, his large blue eyes wide open. He did not approach us, nor make the slightest move. He seemed strangely unattached to the surroundings, no smile nor even a look of impatience on his face.

Finally the time came, around five, o'clock, when we moved toward the little boat, which was to take us across. First the Turkish people, with water pitchers and baskets in their hands, entered and sat wherever they chose. My husband, myself, and the tall Englishman entered and settled in the back, the open part of the boat. We were about thirty people in all, the full capacity of the boat.

By now people had gathered around our small boat. Several of the neighbors who came down with us that noon and had gone back up the hill, had reappeared to say bon voyage to us. Many others whom we did not even know, were also there. It is an interesting part of the life of these islanders to gather around the boats going or coming into the island port. Although many large ships come in from Piraeus, the port of Athens several times a week, this small boat was something that belonged to everyone. Everybody is on hand when they see her coming from Ayvalik or when leaving Mytilene.

Soon little breezes moved in from the sea. Full activity was on, and the night fishing boats that were closely tied at the harbor started sailing in different directions. The large boats in the front and

about five or six small boats painted in the same color, following, each of them in single file, like a mother duck with her ducklings.

After hearing goodbyes from known and unknown persons in Greek and Turkish, the boat's engine began put-putting, and we started, our barefooted captain in full charge. Then, from our moving boat, in the distance we saw people slowly dispersing from the water front.

As soon as we settled in the boat, the Turkish peasants who were returning to their homes across the border, having spent the weekend in Mytilene, opened their baskets and started to eat their cheese and bread, some offering and exchanging with each other. Most of these Turks having been born in Mytilene, spoke perfect Greek and were now living on the Turkish side, often came to spend weekends in their birthplace. That was the reason, that Monday afternoon in the middle of June, there were so many in the boat. A handsome, well dressed young Turk played his mandolin singing a few bars also. He played so well that we complimented him several times, nad he was very pleased at our appreciation.

We were half way to Ayvalik when suddenly pandemonium broke loose in the enclosed section of the boat, and we heard a chorus of male voices repeating *atsen, atsen!* let him jump, let him jump. We peered inside through the open door to inquire about the noise, where we saw our portly, barefooted captain wrestling and struggling with a one-eyed, dark, skinny man, trying to keep him back from a large opening, while a little boy of about seven years of age pulled the man by the leg of his pants, crying aloud and saying, "Yapma, Baba, yapma," Don't do it, Father, don't do it."

The reason we understood, was that the one-eyed, skinny man had forgotten his

lunch basket at the sidewalk cafe at Mytilene, and wanted to return to Mytilene to recover it, threatening to jump into the water if the boat did not turn back. The wrestling went on for several minutes, to the amusement of the men rhythmically chorusing, "Atsen, atsen!"

The Englishman asked us what it was all about, and when we told him the reason, he just moved his head negatively without an expression on his face.

After calming the man by promising to turn back, the kind-hearted captain, not seeing any other alternative, slowly turned back to Mytilene.

When we came into the harbor, we saw a large crowd, already gathered there. Even our friends, who from the top of the hill had seen our boat returning, ran down to the landing speculating that something had gone wrong. The people already had imagined that a man had jumped into the water. It was an incident that incited much conversation among the peaceful Mytilenians that night.

It was getting quite dark when, after passing several uninhabited small islands, we finally reached Ayvalik. The breeze was stirring but it was still hot. We were happy, though, after such long waiting and unexpected ordeals, to arrive at our destination.

"Let us not hurry. Let these people go first. We have plenty of time," we said to each other. By now we had left the boat and were standing in single file, we three being the last in the line.

As we patiently waited for our turn to pass through custom inspection, a man, the same one-eyed man who threatened to jump into the water, approached the customs officer and whispered something in his ear. The tall, neatly dressed officer raised his hand and said something in Turkish, which we did not catch at first, but when he saw that there was no re-

sponse from the back of the line, this time a little louder so as to be heard, he said ceremoniously, meanwhile motioning us toward him.

"I hear that we have guests with us from America tonight. Let them proceed first."

Awakened and startled at this unexpected honor, I turned and said to the Englishman that we have to proceed to be inspected first, because we are guests from America.

Then the three of us passed by all the people waiting in front of us with water pitchers and baskets in their hands.

After smiling and making a short inspection, with a few friendly questions, which was more welcome than anything else, such as how we were enjoying our trip, the inspector expressed the hope that our vacation would be a pleasant one. Thanking him, we left the office to spend the night at the Ayvalik Palace, the only new hotel in Ayvalik, which was a short block from the pier.

We walked up the narrow, long stairs of the hotel, and stopped half way up. A little off the midway, in an open space which was the office of the Hotel, we registered for the night.

We had a room with twin beds in it, but the English student had to share his room with another person, unless he paid for the two beds.

"I can't afford it, I travel on a limited fund. I guess I have to share the room with a Turk," he said.

After arranging for his room, and having all the information about his bus for the next morning, which was going to leave at 8 o'clock, our bus left at 8:30, and was going in a different direction, we said "Good night," and "Good luck" to the English student and parted.

We went to our room, a large room with two wide windows facing the sea. The



day's heat was in the room, but cooling breezes were rushing in from the sea. And after leaving our windows wide open, we retired, thinking of the next day, when a bus was to take us to Balikesir. After spending a night there, the following day we would take a train to Bandirma, and

from Bandirma we could go by boat to Istanbul.

My ankle was swollen now from pain, fatigue and heat, but welcome rest was at hand, and with a contented sigh of thankfulness, I slept and dreamed that night of being in beautiful Istanbul, Turkey.

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